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THE
TWELFTH NIGHT
MASCHERIN

OCTOBER

THE TWELVE MONTHS

Sanctified by Prayer.

OCTOBER,

MONTH OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

BY

M. L'ABBÉ A. RICARD,

D.S.G.

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PREFACE.

THE "Month of the Holy Angels" deserves a place among our little publications for every month in the year. Devotion to these angelic spirits, as our holy guide says, is a mark of high predestination, and I wish to propose it to our faithful readers in an uninterrupted form, which enables me to show the doctrine of the Church, and the various practices of piety, in honour of the holy angels.

The beautiful book on devotion to the nine choirs of angels, by M. Henri-Marie Boudon,*

* *Dévotion aux Neufs Chœurs des Anges*, par M. Henri-Marie Boudon.

which is far too little known, has served me for guide, and I have followed it literally step by step.

The examples and edifying anecdotes are principally borrowed from the "Bollandists," and taken from a compilation, very well arranged, by a former Vicar-general of Evreux.

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MONTH OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

SEPTEMBER 30TH.

Meditation for the Eve of the Month of the Holy Angels.

PRELIMINARY MEDITATION.

Prelude.—Before the Throne where reposes the transcendent Trinity, the nine choirs of angels are prostrate in the rapture of adoration. Let us penetrate into this celestial assembly, and after having rendered to God the homage which is due to Him, let us offer to these blessed spirits the tribute of our praise.

Meditation.—"O men!" exclaimed the holy Archdeacon of Evreux, from whom we borrow the pith of these Meditations, "I invite you to the love and devotion to the holy angels. If you love God, you must love the angels; if you love the rare perfections which God has bestowed on His creatures, you must love the angels; if you love yourselves, you must love the angels."

The angels are incomparable friends by their merit, their love, and their constancy.

I. By their merit, their perfections, and their eminent qualities. No pen, however talented, no mouth, however eloquent, could undertake to describe them.

II. By their love for man. It is so great because it contains all kinds of love, and that in loving us they love God our Creator.

III. By their constancy. They never tire of loving us, no matter what cause we give them to irritate them justly against us. They watch unceasingly over our interests, and act as our fortress and defence against the power of the demons; they are our protection against all our other enemies, and they are all and everything to all men, to render them every kind of service.

But we will not restrict ourselves to devotion to our angel-guardians only. Following the example of truly interior souls, we will offer our homage, during this month, to the cherubim, seraphim, and all the other choirs of angels. As we shall often see, in the course of these meditations, the nearer these celestial spirits approach the Divinity, the more must we feel our respect, our devotion, and our love grow towards them.

Resolution.—Resolve to be very faithful to the practices of the Month of the Holy Angels, during the whole of October.

Aspiration.—"Choirs of Blessed Spirits, pray for us." (*Litany of the Saints.*)

EXAMPLE.

COURAGE, FAITHFUL SERVANT.

When St. Guidon was Abbot of Pompone, in Italy, a young man of Venice, named John, came to ask admission into his monastery. Received by the holy Abbot, and trained under his care, he advanced rapidly in the way of perfection, and soon became a perfect religious; but his career was short, and the prodigy which preceded his death shows how dear he was to God. Being one day in the cloister, in the midst of his brothers and the holy Abbot, an angel came straight to him and said:

"Courage, faithful servant. Come, it is time to enter into the joy of your Lord."

Persuaded that every one had heard also these words which he did not understand, he asked the holy Abbot for an explanation.

"What do you mean, brother?" answered the holy man, who had not seen the apparition.

"The young man tells me that I am a faithful servant, and that it is time to enter into the joy of my Lord."

St. Guidon understood then what it meant, and answered:

"It signifies, my son, that you will soon leave us, to see God."

And, in reality, the young religious was not long in leaving the earth. (*Bolland.*, March 31st.)

OCTOBER 1ST.

Meditation for the First Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE HIERARCHY.

Prelude.—Penetrate again in spirit into the heart of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Let us admire the beautiful variety of this almost infinite number of angelic spirits, and render our homage to Him who has created them for His glory, and our sanctification.

Meditation.—We are going to draw fresh motives for devotion to the holy angels, in the different degrees of the hierarchy, which increases and varies them in an admirable unity.

The pious author of "Devotion to the Nine Choirs of Angels," exclaims, in his exhortation to the love of these blessed spirits:

"Love the Seraphim, they are the princes of pure love.

"Love the Cherubim, they are the great doctors of the science of the saints.

"Love the Thrones, they are the patrons of the repose of soul, and calm peace of heart.

"Love the Dominations, the angels of this

choir will teach you to become masters of yourselves, and all things, raising you above all created beings, by an intimate union with the Creator.

"Love the Virtues, they are the masters of the ways of perfection.

"Love the Powers, they are your defenders against the malice, the rage, and the power of the demons.

"Love the Principalities, the angels of this choir exercise an incessant solicitude over Monarchies and States, and those who govern them.

"Love the Archangels, they watch over the general good; provinces, towns, and the smallest localities experience the effect of their zeal and solicitude.

"Love also the angels of the last choir, they are the planets whose influence we feel oftenest, because they are nearer to us, and watch over the interests of each man with an incomparable love and zeal."

Resolution.—Strive to extend around us devotion to the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"Queen of Angels, pray for us." (*Litany of the Blessed Virgin.*)

EXAMPLE.

ANGELIC SECRETS.

HERE is an instance related by the confessor of St. Juette, and which he affirms, having heard it

from herself. One day, being ravished in spirit, she saw coming to meet her eighteen angels, walking two by two, and who belonged to the nine choirs. They clothed her in a dress woven with gold, and added an ornament of precious stones of all the kinds mentioned by St. John, in the twenty-first chapter of his Apocalypse.

"The description which she gave me," he says, "of their names and colours, was quite sufficient to convince me, without any other proofs, of the truth of her vision, for I knew her to be quite ignorant on that subject. After having adorned her thus magnificently, the celestial spirits conducted her before the throne of the Lamb. What did she see there? what did she hear? what passed between her soul and that of her Divine spouse? That is either what she would not or could not tell me; besides, it is probable that I should have understood nothing, for the secrets of the heavenly country are too much above our weak intellects." (*Bolland.*, Jan. 13th.)

OCTOBER 2ND.

Meditation for the Second Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELIC NATURE.

Prelude.—Let us disengage ourselves as much as possible from the thoughts and pre-occupa-

tions of earth, and let us raise our minds to contemplate this masterpiece from the hands of the Most High.

Meditation.—The angels are spiritual beings incorruptible in their nature, perfectly detached from matter, and completely exempt from all the miseries which surround us on every side. They are spirits of marvellous brightness. They know the whole of nature, and secrets inaccessible to the greatest intellects which have ever appeared among men, are perfectly understood by them; they know everything without any difficulty, and in a minute, however numerous they may be, and that without any doubt or obscurity. They do not make use of conversation like men, neither do they require like us reasonings, which lead them from a thing more known to one less known. They understand at first sight, and that is why they are called in an eminent degree the intelligent spirits.

Holy Scripture gives them a fiery and dazzling garment, to symbolise their intelligence and radiance. It gives them, in the Apocalypse, a vestment similar to that of the Pontiffs of the old law, to teach us that the holiest mysteries of religion are revealed to them.

Finally, it represents them to us enveloped in clouds, to show us that their radiance is too brilliant to be seen by our intellects; we can only gaze on them veiled, for the sight of man is not powerful enough to look at them face to face. The most learned men, the most marvellous in-

tellects of mankind are but as those of children, compared to these celestial intelligences.

Therefore, is there not much here to humble proud hearts and the vainest reasoning? O intellect of man! compare yourself to the sublimity of angelic intellect, and consider if it is still possible to pride yourself and to lean haughtily on the arguments of weak and feeble reason.

Resolution.—Practise an act of humility in honour of the holy angels.

Aspiration. — "Lord, I will sing praise to Thee in the sight of the angels." (*Psalm* cxxxvii. 2.)

EXAMPLE.

VISION OF SAINT THERESA.

"Sometimes, it has pleased God," said the illustrious St. Theresa, "to make me see an angel at my left hand, and under a corporal form, which is a rare occurrence. That is why I make the observation; for although I often have visions of angels, they pass without my perceiving them with the eyes of my body. The one who appeared to me on the occasion of which I speak, was small, and of a beauty so admirable and so magnificent, that I took it for one of those superior spirits, all fire and love, which are called Seraphim. This angel held in his hand a large dart, which seemed to me of gold, and carried fire at its point. It appeared to me that

he plunged it into my heart at several different times, and the pain was so severe that I could not help crying out, although it was not corporal suffering. This happened spiritually, and, by a wonderful prodigy, the pain was accompanied by so piercing a sweetness, that I was far from wishing a cessation of such delicious suffering.

OCTOBER 3RD.

Meditation for the Third Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE POWER OF THE ANGELS.

Prelude.—Let us open the eyes of our faith. The air which surrounds us, and nature itself obeys the power of the angels; and let us venerate and praise God, who has confided to them so much authority.

Meditation.—The power of the angels deserves as much attention and praise from us as the greatness of their intellect. A single angel could achieve what all mankind united could not realise; for God has gifted these superior spirits with extraordinary power. Angels can loosen the winds, and cause the rain to fall; they can make the thunder roar, and rouse the tempests; they can raise earthquakes, and control the waters; they can give abundance, or

famine; in a word, they can, instantaneously, work wonders of which man does not even understand the cause.

These truths are too much unknown in our days, and, faith diminishing in the world, it is rare to meet with Christians who think of invoking the power of the holy angels, in public calamities, or in the trials of private life. Do not let us imitate these blind and forgetful ones, and since we have the opportunity of recalling a truth which is too little known, let us take the resolution often to have recourse to the intercession of the holy angels in all the necessities of the society to which we belong, as also in all special needs of our own life.

Let families, religious communities, associations, and individuals, confide to the holy angels the care of their interests, for they could not be placed in hands more sure, more powerful, or more devoted.

Resolution.—Have recourse to the power of the angels in all our distresses.

Aspiration.—God hath commanded His angels to have charge over us.

EXAMPLE.

MIRACULOUS PROTECTION.

Saint Maïeul, returning from Rome to Cluny, was taken by the Saracens, at the pass of Mount St. Bernard, and led captive to a town situated

on the shores of the Drause. They put irons on his feet, and shut him up in a dungeon with his companions; but he knew by revelation that his captivity would not be long, and twice the angels came to break his chains, as if to warn the brigands to restore him to liberty. This, however, not being sufficient to enlighten them, the blessed spirits made them witnesses of their miraculous apparitions, and as they could not touch them, they killed several of them; then the others hastened to liberate the servant of God, and begged for holy baptism. After their conversion, they told any one who would listen to them, that there were often celestial concerts in the prison where they were guarding the saint. (*Bolland.*, May 19th.)

OCTOBER 4TH.

Meditation for the Fourth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

BEAUTY OF THE ANGELS.

Prelude.—Let us transport ourselves in spirit to the Heavenly Jerusalem, where millions of angels decorate it with their varied beauty, and render it the most ravishing abode.

Meditation.—Compared to the splendour of the angels, the beauties of visible creation are

but ugliness; for angels, in reality, are but beauty, and the least of them is more beautiful than all the delights of the world united. The mind is lost in the sole thought of the infinite variety of beauty which exists among the angelic choirs, for each angel himself constitutes a complete and different species, consequently a particular beauty. On the other hand, as we have just said, the least of these blessed spirits is more beautiful than all the creatures of the earth. O Universal Creator! what beauty is there not in your holy Sion! One day, St. Anselm, despairing of giving his disciples even a feeble idea of this truth, and wishing to show them a comparison drawn from sensible objects, assured them that if God put an angel in the place of the sun, and surrounded him with as many suns as there are stars, allowing this celestial spirit to give to a borrowed body some rays of its light, he would eclipse all the light of the suns and render them invisible to our eyes.

We can say, to sum it all up in one word, that angels are pure and transparent mirrors which reflect admirably the Divinity of Whom they are the vivid image. And this is why Jacob said he had seen the Lord face to face, because he had enjoyed the apparition of an angel.

O heart of man! can you now help loving the angels, when your disposition leads you to the love of what is beautiful, noble, and perfect?

Resolution.—When the beauties of created

nature appeal to our heart, let us think of the beauty of the angels, which awaits us in heaven.

Aspiration. — "My name is Admirable!" (*Answer of the angel to Manuel.*)

EXAMPLE.

A VISION.

One of the disciples of St. Simeon Stylitus, named Anthony, related, as I am going to tell you, an event which happened after the death of this great saint. "As soon as he had given up his soul I despatched a brother to the Bishop of Antioch to acquaint him with this sad news. I say sad, because this death left us orphans. The Bishop left immediately, with three other prelates and Ardabure, commander of the militia. When they had arrived at the base of the column they had the body lowered, and soon, although it was broad daylight, thick darkness enveloped it. I then saw an angel who placed himself beside him, and after that appeared seven unknown old men, who conversed with this heavenly spirit, but in a low voice, so that I heard nothing of their conversation. The clothing of the angel was white as snow, and his countenance bright as lightning. I contemplated him for a long time, but my eyes could not bear his splendour, and when the vision had disappeared I spoke of it to the brother who had returned from Antioch, and he told me that he

had often seen, during the lifetime of the saint, an angel, shining with glory, conversing with him. (*Bolland.*, January 5th.)

OCTOBER 5TH.

Meditation for the Fifth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELS' LOVE FOR MAN.

Prelude.—Let us represent to ourselves the holy angels under the form of the good and faithful guide of Tobias, full of solicitude and care for his dear companion.

Meditation.—The angels' love for us shows itself to us in different characters, on which we will try to meditate, in studying them in the different manifestations of their love towards man.

They love us with the love of a father, always solicitous to procure our advancement, always seeking our interests, never ceasing to do us good, considering all that touches us as their own concern, taking an infinite care to make us advance in the way of perfection. The good angels forget nothing which can assure us the inheritance of glory, which has been won for us by the mercy of the adorable Jesus, the King of angels.

Their love is the love of a mother, for it is

written that they will bear us up in their hands. They carry us in their arms, and on their hearts, as a good mother holds her child pressed to her bosom; and their eyes do not leave us, they take care of our souls and our bodies, and lavish on us every tenderness which a holy love can inspire.

This love is again a fraternal love. They consider us as their younger brothers, and oh, how wonderful and rare, sentiments more worthy of heaven than earth—not only they are not sorry to see us become their equals in glory, but on the contrary, they are enraptured with it, and would willingly render us more glorious than they themselves are in Paradise.

They love us like tender friends, thinking incessantly of seeking our friendship, never losing sight of us day or night, leaving even the magnificent abode of heaven to live continually with us on the earth, wishing and seeking for us more good than for themselves.

Resolution.—Renew our affectionate confidence towards the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"Nothing is so sweet and amiable as the presence of the holy angels." (*Words of St. Anthony.*)

EXAMPLE.

A VIRGIN PROTECTED BY ANGELS.

Lucius, pro-consul at Constantinople, under the reign of Justinian, had a daughter named Arthel-

laïs, of remarkable beauty. An officer who had seen her at her father's house, having spoken of her to the Emperor in a tone of admiration, he was curious to see her, and begged her father to send her to him. Lucius, rightly jealous of his daughter's virtue, answered by a refusal. The Emperor was wounded, and ordered an officer of his guard to carry her off by main force; but Lucius, warned in time of this tyrannical measure, hid her so well that his emissary could not discover her.

Arthellaïs, persuaded that the Emperor would make still more active researches, and that she could not long escape him, said to her father and mother, "My dear parents, take me, I pray you, from here, and let me be conducted by faithful servants to my uncle at Benevento." The uncle of whom she spoke was the celebrated Narses, who commanded the imperial troops in Italy; and Lucius, to whom this advice seemed very wise, made her depart at once, under the care of three devoted servants, saying to her, "Go, my daughter, and may the Angel of the Lord accompany you." Justinian only heard of the flight a few days afterwards, but he was so incensed at it, that he ordered his guards to seek Lucius, and to behead him. Lucius, hearing of the danger which threatened him, saved himself by seeking refuge with the Emperor's nephew, who found means of hiding him from their researches. During this time Arthellaïs continued her journey, but it was not long a successful one;

in approaching the town of Budna, in Dalmatia, she met some robbers, from whom her servants escaped by flight, leaving her alone in their hands. They took her off to their retreat, and kept her seven days without showing her any violence, by a most special protection from Heaven. On the eighth day an angel came and opened the door of her prison, and gave her back to her servants, and they, quite joyous, hired a ship which carried them to Siponto, a town close to Benevento. Although most eager to arrive there, the young virgin would, nevertheless, out of gratitude, perform her devotions at Mount Gargan. The following night an angel, disguised as an old man, appeared to Narses, and said to him, "Rise, General, and go before your niece Arthellaïs, who comes to seek with you a shelter for her innocence; you will find her at Siponto." Narses left at once, and received his niece with extreme good-will, and took her joyously to his house. She made herself celebrated in the town by her virtues and her miracles, but she did not linger long for heaven, as she died at the age of only sixteen years, three months, and eight days. (*Bolland.*, March 3rd.)

OCTOBER 6TH.

Meditation for the Sixth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELS' LOVE FOR MAN (*continuation*).

Prelude.—Let us look around us, and faith will allow us to see the good angels so devoted to the good of our souls; and after having rendered them our homage and respect, let us continue to meditate on the different ways under which their goodness shows itself to us.

Meditation.—Angels love us, not only as father, mother, brother and friend, but they love us also with the love of a watchful pastor. Is it not of these blessed spirits that we can rightly say, that "he shall neither slumber nor sleep that keepeth Israel"?

They love us as charitable physicians, since they dress our wounds, cure our maladies, and restore us to health with unparalleled sweetness. Their love transforms them into counsellors and zealous defenders, attending to all our interests, either in heaven or earth; and, above all, to the great work of our eternity, and this with an unutterable goodness.

They love us as faithful guardians, leading us with an affecting love through the difficult paths of this life, and protecting us from the precipices which surround us on every side. They love us with the love of a good master, keeping us under

their protection, and causing us to obtain an excessive reward for the minute services we render them.

Their love makes them act to us as most learned and most zealous doctors, who teach us the science of the saints, and the eminent doctrine of the Lord Jesus.

And finally, this love transforms them into most merciful kings, who defend us from our enemies, make us live in peace, and keep us in perfect security.

In a word, they love us as much as they can love us.

O my God! behold then our hearts impelled and obliged to return love for love to these beings so noble, so beautiful, so powerful, and so perfect; to these great princes of the courts of Sion.

Resolution.—Offer up some mortification to God in honour of the holy angels, so as to return them love for love.

Aspiration.—"The Lord hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." (*Psalm* xc. 11.)

EXAMPLE.

MARVELLOUS CONDESCENSION.

St. Apollo, leaving the desert to collect disciples, had received five, and established himself in a cavern with them. The feast of Easter having arrived, they prolonged their exercises of

piety longer than usual, and without taking anything, so that they were very hungry; nevertheless, they had nothing to eat but dry bread and some vegetables. The holy man, wishing his novices to enjoy themselves a little more than usual in the Lord, said to them, "See, my children, if Jesus Christ is pleased with our conduct, let each of you ask Him for some food, according to his taste." "We could not, father," they answered, "ask such a thing with faith; for it would be a favour of which we feel ourselves unworthy." "Well, then," said St. Apollo, "I will ask it." And accordingly he made his prayer in great joy, and his disciples answered with the Amen. At the same instant, some men quite unknown arrived at the cavern, saying they came from a land far away, to bring them provisions of food. In saying this, they drew from their baskets fruits of all kinds, foreign to the country, and ripe before their time; bread of a dazzling whiteness, honeycombs, and a bowl of milk still warm; after which, bowing to the servants of God, they went out and disappeared, and these, astonished, thought—and with good cause—that they were not men, but angels sent by God. (*Bolland.*, January 25th.)

OCTOBER 7TH.

Meditation for the Seventh Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELS' LOVE FOR MAN (*continuation and end*).

Prelude.—Let us kneel at the feet of our good angel-guardian, and conclude in his sweet presence the considerations which we began two days ago.

Meditation.—The angels began to love us when we began to exist, and their affection will never diminish during the whole course of our life, so that it depends on us, whether it will last during all eternity. They love us in everything which affects our true interests, and there is nothing they would not do to forward them for us.

It is then true that the holy angels are our oldest friends, and that their love is the sweetest, the most faithful, the most constant, the most patient, and the most universal of all loves. It is still more disinterested, for what do they receive in exchange from man but inconceivable ingratitude, offensive contempt, and intolerable injuries.

Infidels do not know them, heretics know them, but do not render to them the homage which is their due; a great number of Christians ignore them as much as the infidels, and only a

few souls think of showing them a little gratitude from time to time.

When we are really conscious of these truths, and meditate on them seriously, the soul falls into an astonishment from which she does not easily recover. Just think, how on one side there is the excess of love of the angels towards man, and on the other, excess of ingratitude and coldness of man towards the angels; and you will ask yourself, how comes it that these heavenly spirits continue to love man with so much devotedness? O heart of man, cast off this hardness and this ingratitude, give yourself up, once for all, to the attractions of love; love the angels, love the God of angels, for it is in Him only that everything that is lovable must be loved.

Resolution.—Remember often during the day to think of the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"Behold, He shall neither slumber nor sleep that keepeth Israel." (*Psalm* CXX. 4.)

EXAMPLE.

MIRACULOUS DELIVERANCE.

When St. Julian, apostle of Le Mans, preached Jesus Christ at the gates of the town, the prince of the country, named Defensor, hearing of the prodigies which he worked everywhere on his way, was curious to see him, and sent to beg him to come to him. The apostle, delighted at this

invitation, of which he foresaw the happy result, hastened to obey, and on arriving at the gate of the palace he met a blind man, whom he restored to sight by making on his forehead the sign of the Cross. The prince, learning this event, ran to meet the Thaumaturgus, and falling on his knees before him, begged him to give him baptism. The saint began by instructing him, as well as his family and servants, and when that was accomplished, he bestowed on them all the sacrament of regeneration; and strong under the protection of Defensor, he went through the country, sowing prodigies on his way, and gathering souls for God. On his return, he went to see the prince, who welcomed him as an angel from heaven, and when he was returning from the palace to his dwelling, he had to pass under the walls of the prison; the unfortunate beings who were consigned there cried to him to have pity on their misery, and the charitable apostle, filled with compassion, retraced his steps, and applied to the judge to obtain their pardon; but he was a pitiless man, and the saint could not move him, so he returned home very sadly, and instead of taking his ordinary food, he retreated to his oratory, and betook himself to prayer.

Whilst he prayed, an angel entered the prison, opened the doors, broke the chains of the captives, and restored them to liberty; and they, not doubting but that this miracle was due to the prayers of the holy Bishop, flocked at once to his dwelling, and he, delighted, made them sit

at his table, after which they returned home without any one having thought of disturbing them, so evident was the miracle. (*Bolland.*, January 27th.)

OCTOBER 8TH.

Meditation for the Eighth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ALL THE ANGELS ARE IN THE SERVICE OF MAN.

Prelude.—After having offered our most affectionate thanks to these angelic spirits for their love, let us prepare ourselves to meditate on the services which they render to man.

Meditation.—How many angels are deputed to the service of man? Let us listen to St. Paul, who answers us, that "all are sent for our salvation." "All the angels," says St. Augustine, "are committed to our care, since we form together but one city of God." One of the divisions of this city, that which is composed by men, and still on the road, is assisted by that other division which is composed of angels, who live in the blissful possession of all good. "When we speak of angels as watching over the salvation of man," adds the eloquent St. Chrysostom, "we do not mean only the angels of the last choirs, but also those of the highest."

And Holy Scripture gives us manifest proofs of it.

St. Raphael, who acted as guide to young Tobias, assures us he is one of the seven princes who stand before God; they are cherubim who appear to the prophet Ezechiel; it is a seraphim who purifies the lips of Isaias; we read, even in Genesis, that God entrusted to a cherubim the keeping of the terrestrial paradise, from which we see clearly that the angels, even of the first choirs, are sent here below for the guidance of man.

The lives of the saints teach us the same truths. It is a seraphim who imprinted the wounds of our sweet Saviour on the body of St. Francis of Assisium; it was also a seraphim who wounded so lovingly the heart of the seraphic Theresa.

We must then consider, as an unquestionable truth, that all the holy angels, without reserve, take care of us in one way or another, and that all the nine choirs of angels are at the service of man.

Resolution.—Entertain profound sentiments of gratitude towards all the choirs of angels.

Aspiration.—"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" (*Epistle to the Hebrews*, i. 14.)

EXAMPLE.

A TRULY CHRISTIAN PREOCCUPATION.

Amalburga, mother of St. Gulide, was one of those truly Christian women who desire to bring their children into the world only to make them citizens of heaven. Whilst she bore this virgin in her womb, her salvation was already the object of her solicitude, and often she expressed to God the ardent desire which she had of it; and as it often happens that the thoughts of the day are reproduced in dreams, she had one on this subject, which began in trouble and finished by a most sweet consolation. She imagined that she would bring into the world a daughter, and she was very anxious to know if she would lead a pure life, or if she would be like those unfortunate beings who dishonour their sex by their depravity; and the anxiety which this solicitude brought upon her was so great that God had pity on her, and He sent her an angel who addressed her in these consoling words:

"Be without fear of the destiny of the child of the female sex which you will bring into the world. She will be holy from her earliest years, and will make admirable progress in virtue, and, after a short life, will go up to heaven, where great glory awaits her."

He disappeared at these words, leaving the fortunate mother filled with the most lively joy. —(*Bolland.*, January 6th.)

OCOTBER 9TH.

Meditation for the Ninth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

SENTIMENTS OF GRATITUDE.

Prelude.—Let us represent to ourselves the inhabitants of the heavenly city watching over our interests, and the nine choirs of angels willing to undertake anything to procure our salvation.

Meditation.—If we were told that a great and powerful monarch had ordered one of the highest princes of his court to leave him, and to remain always near us, to render us every possible service, what would not be our gratitude? Could we contain our joy? and what would not be our astonishment, our surprise, and the joy of our parents and friends? But human history contains nothing similar; these are not earthly secrets, but ones reserved for heaven; and it belongs only to the King of Heaven to accomplish such prodigies of love.

O my soul, my soul! have you well thought about it; have you well understood that all the princes of the court of the King of kings watch over your interests, are charged with the care of you, and guard with ineffable goodness everything that concerns you? It is true that one of these princes is more especially deputed to watch over you in a more direct manner; but indeed,

says Holy Scripture, all are sent for those who have received the inheritance of salvation.

How wonderful is the love of God, who has sent them! how touching is the love of the princes who are sent! and what consolation for our poor souls! After this, why are we troubled? One only of these princes is sufficient to take away from us all fears, and to raise our courage, no matter how discouraged we may be; and here are millions, a thousand millions, an infinity of millions, or to speak in the language of the Fathers, here are numbers innumerable.

O my heart, consider then, once for all, and see if such powerful protection does not ensure your safety, and place all your care in striving to correspond with the friendship of these illustrious princes of Sion. Alas! why should we still busy ourselves on this earth, for are there not in heaven too many friendships for us to cultivate, to make us occupy ourselves with men?

Resolution.—Propose to our heart the cultivation of friendship with the angels, especially when it complains of the loneliness and forgetfulness of the earth.

Aspiration.—"How vile the earth seems to me when I contemplate heaven." (*St. Francis Xavier.*)

EXAMPLE.

MIRACULOUS COMMUNION.

THE venerable Ida, of Louvain, religious of a monastery of Citeaux, near Malines, experienced

an ardent desire for frequent communion, but did not dare to mention it to her confessor, and God, who reads in the depth of the heart, saw that this fear was inspired by humility, and would not let her lose by it. When then she felt this devouring hunger on the days when she was not allowed to present herself at the holy table, her angel took off the altar a small particle of the priest's Host, and placed it on her tongue. It was not an illusion, for she felt and tasted the sacred species, and besides, the effects which she experienced interiorly, attested the truth of the real presence of Jesus Christ in her soul. (*Bolland.*, April 13th.)

OCTOBER 10TH.

Meditation for the Tenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ALL MEN ARE ASSISTED BY THE ANGELS.

Prelude.—Let us contemplate the eagerness with which the holy angels, ever full of zeal to accomplish the Will of God, give themselves to the service of men.

Meditation.—O Lord, what is man that You deign to make Yourself known to him, and give him the love of Your heart. You love him, You spread over him the cloak of Your Providence,

You give him Your only Son, You send him Your Holy Spirit, and so that there may be nothing in heaven which is not occupied with him, and for him, You send Your blessed spirits to guard, serve, and instruct him.

Behold then, this angel, this great prince, filled with perfection, goodness, and glory. Behold him in the service of man, who is filled with imperfection, ugliness, and misery—man, who is but an ant, a worm of the earth, a mass of corruption, the unclean food of worms, mud and mire, a blade of grass, a leaf which the wind carries off. But, and it is a more astonishing wonder—behold the angel in the service of sinful man!

O soul! whoever you may be, pause awhile, I entreat you, to consider leisurely this ineffable marvel, for it is already an immense subject of astonishment to see the goodness of the angels incline itself so as to take care of persons who allow themselves to offend their Creator, notwithstanding the knowledge which they possess of the infinitely adorable perfections of the Divine Majesty which they wound by their sins; but what must not then be our amazement to see that the blessed spirits do not leave these miserable beings who live in mortal sin, who are deicides, who trample under their feet the blood of a God and make themselves guilty of His death.

Resolution.—Avoid sin out of respect for the guardianship of the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"Their angels in heaven always

see the face of My Father, Who is in heaven." (*St. Matthew* xviii. 10.)

EXAMPLE.

THE TWO LABOURERS.

ST. ISIDORE, the labourer, placed himself at the service of an officer of Majorca, who employed him in the cultivation of his fields. Some envious people in the neighbourhood, perceiving that he went each morning to visit the churches, and arrived rather late at his work, gave notice of it to his master, who, considering Isidore as a faithful servant, was surprised at this accusation, and wished to prove its truth himself. He went the next morning to the field, where the holy man was to work, but several hours passed, and he did not appear; and indignant at this carelessness, he was already thinking of dismissing him, when he saw two ploughs drawn by four oxen, and guided by two unknown men. Isidore arrived meanwhile, and allowed the strangers to continue their work undisturbed; whilst the master, who was very much surprised, hastened to inquire the meaning of this extraordinary behaviour, but on entering the field, he perceived only Isidore guiding the plough in his usual way. Not being able to explain so extraordinary an event, he approached the holy man, and said to him, "Who then are these young men who, a little while ago, did your work, and what

has become of them?" "I assure you, my master," answered Isidore, "I have called no one to my help; with the aid of God, I can do my work, and this help is never wanting to me." The officer was persuaded that those whom he had seen could only have been angels, and had more confidence than ever in his faithful servant, and henceforth let him act as he wished in his fields. (*Bolland.*, May 15th).

OCTOBER 11TH.

Meditation for the Eleventh Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ALL MEN ARE ASSISTED BY THE ANGELS (*end*).

Prelude.—After having recalled the remembrance of the surprise which the consideration of the truths of yesterday must have given us, let us prepare ourselves to continue the study of the same subject.

Meditation.—Sinners are not the sole objects of angelic solicitude, for, if we listen to holy doctors, we shall learn that heretics and infidels have also angel-guardians.

The seraphic Theresa said that the soul of a Catholic, in the state of mortal sin, was like a beautiful mirror whose purity was entirely soiled and horribly tarnished, so that it was a most

hideous spectacle to behold, but, she says, this mirror is with heretics not only soiled but broken.

The sin of heresy is an evil so great that we shall only realise its full extent in the region of the bright light of eternity. But the love of the angels is not disheartened, they watch over these unhappy beings who make themselves guilty, as they watch over infidels, pagans, and idolaters; and the enemies even of the Christian name are assisted by them, says St. Thomas of Aquinas, who goes still further when he assures us that Antichrist himself will have his angel-guardian, who will prevent him from doing many works prejudicial to others, or to himself.

This protection of the holy angels towards infidels and heretics produces many salutary effects.

Let us weigh, then, these two great truths—all the nine choirs of angels are in the service of man, all men are assisted by the angels. You would say that they were passionately fond of them, and yet these celestial beauties bestow their love on hideousness and receive in return insolent contempt.

Resolution.—Invoke the holy angels when we wish to leave the state of sin to return to God.

Aspiration.—"Now, therefore, you are no more strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and the domestics of God. (*St. Paul to the Ephesians*, ii. 19.)

EXAMPLE.

VISION OF ST. BENEDICT.

This is a fact related by St. Gregory the Great (*Dialogue*, I., II., ch. xxxv.) St. Benedict, being in contemplation one night at his window, whilst his religious were wrapped in deep slumber, had the following vision. He saw, leaving the earth and raising itself in the air, a light so radiant that it dissipated the darkness and turned the night into day. When this light, which came from afar off, passed over his head, he gazed at it attentively and saw, in a globe of fire formed by the glory of the angels, the soul of St. Germain of Capua, which they were bearing to heaven, and, anxious to have a witness of this miracle, he cried out loudly to one of his disciples, Servand, who slept near him, and he, awaking and hearing the voice of his Father, hastened to him promptly. But it was too late, the angelical cortege was already distant, and he could only see a feeble light. The saint despatched at once to Capua another disciple, named Theoprobe, so as to know if the Bishop had quitted the earth, and at what hour he had died. The answer convinced him that the Pontiff had expired exactly at the hour when he had seen his soul mount up in glory.

OCTOBER 12TH.

Meditation for the Twelfth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELS GUIDE MEN.

Prelude.—Let us with the eyes of faith consider at our side the blessed spirit to whom God has confided the care of watching over us, and let us offer him our homage of respect and gratitude.

Meditation.—O my soul! have you ever seriously considered in what manner your good angel guards you, and extends over you a continual protection; how this sweet prince of Paradise will never leave you in this valley of misery and tears?

"Angels," says St. Augustine, "enter and go out with us, having always their eyes fixed on us, and on what we are doing. If we stop at a dwelling, they stop also; if we go out to walk, they accompany us; if we leave the country, they follow us; wherever we go, on earth or water, they are always with us; if a solitary shuts himself up in his hermitage, his good angel lives with him; or if a traveller changes his country constantly, his good angel follows him to all parts."

O excessive goodness! Even while we sleep they watch near us, they are always at our side,

even when we are sinners and consequently their enemy. If we are not happy enough to enter Paradise at once, they will visit us in the prison of purgatory, and come eagerly to console us.

And, indeed, is not this being more our servants and our slaves than our guardians? Let us begin, therefore, to-day to appreciate as it deserves this great proof of the goodness of God towards us. And how, Lord! these princes of Paradise, these glorious spirits, are they our servants and our slaves? Ah! I understand now, better than ever, that profound word of a learned and holy doctor: "The life of a Christian is a life of astonishment and admiration."

Resolution.—Think often of the presence of our good angel-guardian.

Aspiration.—"He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." (*Psalm* xc. 11.)

EXAMPLE.

ST. PHILIP NERI.

THIS holy man had in Rome some poor but proud people whom he only visited at night, so that no one perceived the help which he carried them, and this gave rise to an incident in which doubtless the malice of the devil had part; but God, who knows how to draw good from evil, took occasion to work a prodigy in his favour. This is what happened. The servant of God going one night to carry some bread to a nobleman reduced

to indigence, met a carriage of which the horses were going very fast, and wishing to get on one side to avoid them, he fell into a deep ditch, which the darkness had hidden from him; but God did not allow the fall to be completed, for an angel stopped him, and placed him safely on his feet in the street. (*Baronius.*)

OCTOBER 13TH.

Meditation for the Thirteenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELS WATCH OVER THE UNIVERSE.

Prelude.—Let us again see with the eyes of faith, and consider how the world is filled with angels, who watch over it, and are the instruments of the Providence of God with regard to it.

Meditation.—The love of angels towards man does not manifest itself only by that incessant guardianship which we admired yesterday, but it also watches over everything in the universe for the service of man.

And, in effect, according to the doctrine of St. Augustine, the visible world is governed by pure spirits, invisible creatures, and this great doctor adds that there are even angels who preside over every visible thing, and over every

species of creatures, either animate or inanimate.

The heavens and the stars have their angel-guardians, and the heavens have a special angel, as it is said in the Apocalypse; air has its angels who govern the winds, as one sees in the same book; kingdoms have their angels, as it is related in Daniel; and Genesis teaches us that provinces have also theirs, for the angels who appeared to Joseph were those of the provinces through which he passed. "Jacob," said St. Augustine on this subject, "saw two troops of angels, one commanded by the angel of Mesopotamia, who had conducted this holy patriarch and his troop to the confines of Chanaan. Here the holy man was received by the angel of Chanaan, accompanied by a multitude of inferior angels to serve him as escort, and to defend him against his enemies."

Each country, according to St. Clement, has an angel who takes care of it, towns and villages have one also, and even each particular family, following the opinion of the learned Cardinal Tostat, so that much more certainly have each church and altar a particular angel-guardian, as it has pleased God to reveal to many of His saints.

Resolution.—Accustom ourselves to venerate the presence of the angels in the visible universe.

Aspiration.—"I will send My angel who shall go before thee: take notice of him, and hear his

voice, and do not think him one to be contemned." (*Exodus* xxiii. 20, 21.)

EXAMPLE.

THE ANGELS WHO GO AND COME.

St. Joseph of Cupertino was much loved by the angels, they honoured him by frequent apparitions, and he received many graces through their ministry. One holy soul saw him enter the town of Assisi between two of these glorious spirits, and it was proved in the process of his canonisation that it often occurred to him to fly in the air. It was without doubt these blessed spirits who transported him thus, from one place to another, and I will only quote one instance. Going one day to Rome with another religious, and having arrived at the summit of a mountain, his companion said to him, "I see the Church of Loretto," and he pointed it out with his finger; and St. Joseph, after having looked at it, cried out joyfully, "Do you not see the angels who come and go from heaven to this church, and from the church to heaven?" and having said this, he raised himself eighteen feet in the air, and descended six perches further off. This favourite of the angels had for his own guardian so much veneration, that he never entered his cell without making him a profound salutation, and begging him to pass before him. (*Bolland.*, September 18th.)

OCTOBER 14TH.

Meditation for the Fourteenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE ANGELS WATCH OVER THE UNIVERSE (*end*).

Prelude.—Let us look around us; angels surround us on every side.

Meditation.—As we said yesterday, the world is full of angels, and it would seem as if the government of Divine Providence required it.

If it is true, as some theologians affirm, that the air is so full of demons, that if these spirits had bodies they would change broad daylight into the darkest night, and intercept all the rays of the sun, how could man, who is weakness itself, resist such an imposing force, if he were not aided by the protection of the holy angels.

But it is a great pity to see how man is subject to the flesh, and only thinks of those objects which fall under his senses; so that speak to him of spiritual things, either he does not listen, or he forgets them with extreme facility.

The prophet Eliseus spoke in vain to his servant of the protection of these glorious spirits; he could hardly believe it, and only realised it surely when God opened his eyes miraculously, and made him see them under a sensible form. O, if God, in His goodness,

granted us a like grace, what wonders would we not find in it.

Let us not then neglect to consider how all the advantages and good we derive from earth, air, water, fire, the heavens, animals, plants, and, in a word, from all creatures, come to us by the ministry of the holy angels, who are the faithful ministers of the God we adore, Who is admirable in His gifts, and Who deserves, in consequence, to receive immortal praise for ever.

Resolution.—Make use of creatures with deep feelings of gratitude to their holy angel-guardians.

Aspiration.—"Say not before the angel: There is no Providence." (*Ecclesiastes*, v. 5.)

EXAMPLE.

CELESTIAL MUSIC.

St. Dunstan was a skilful musician, and by the example of David he chanted psalms, which he accompanied with a guitar. One day, whilst conversing with some friends, they heard that instrument, which was suspended on the wall, give out sounds of inconceivable sweetness, in harmony with a celestial voice, which sang these words: "Happy the saints who have followed in the footsteps of the Lamb; their souls will rejoice in the heavenly courts, and because they have shed their blood for Jesus Christ, they will reign eternally with Him." (*Bolland.*, May 19th.)

OCTOBER 15TH.

Meditation for the Fifteenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ASSISTANCE IN TEMPORAL MATTERS.

Prelude.—Let us represent to ourselves the holy angels so eager to render us every service.

Meditation.—After having spoken of the general benefits of the angels, it will be a good thing to enter more into the detail of particular favours with which they honour us, so that the heart of man can find no excuse for not loving them, and therefore let us consider first their benefits in the temporal order.

The angels take care of our corporal education, the nourishment of our body, and the satisfaction of our legitimate desires; they procure temporal goods for those who love them, if it is not contrary to the order of God's Providence; and it was thus that, by their holy industry, Jacob became rich under Laban, and far from contenting themselves with obtaining us every good, they deliver us from all kinds of evil, curing our maladies, etc., so that we cannot do better than address ourselves to these charitable spirits, and honour them by private and public devotions, to appease God's anger, and obtain His mercy.

We ought to reckon all the evils with which we can be afflicted in our bodies and our souls,

in our goods, either temporal, natural, or moral, whether public or particular, in war, pestilence, or famine, on the part of our friends and enemies, to be able to calculate the help which we receive from the holy angels, and to teach all people that those are the sweet and mighty protectors to whom they must have recourse in all their wants.

Resolution.—Have recourse to the goodness of the angels in all our temporal wants.

Aspiration.—"Go, ye swift angels, to a nation rent and torn in pieces, who await the help of its God." (*Isaias*, xviii. 2.)

EXAMPLE.

THE FALLING HOUSE.

When St. Polycarp was Bishop of Smyrna, he went one day to visit the Christians in the country, accompanied by a priest named Camerius, and darkness and fatigue compelled them to sleep in a deserted house built on the road to serve as refuge for travellers. Towards the middle of the night, an angel came to interrupt his slumber, and said to him, "Rise quickly, Polycarp, and leave this house, for it will fall presently." The holy Bishop awakened Camerius and bade him rise promptly; and he, opening his eyes, and seeing that it was still deep night, answered, little satisfied, "Father, you love to meditate on the Holy Scriptures, so

that you neither sleep nor leave to others the liberty of sleeping; it is scarcely midnight, and I can do no more from fatigue, yet you already wish me to get up." The Bishop was silent, hoping, no doubt, that although he murmured, he would obey; but he did not, and at the delay the angel came again, and said to Polycarp, "Make him get up, for time presses." And Camerius, called again, and reminded a second time of the danger which threatened them, answered, "Father, the house will not fall whilst you are in it; I have confidence in the goodness of God." "And so have I," replied the Bishop; "but not in these walls." Then the angel spoke a third time, and so urgently, that Polycarp fled, which obliged his priest to do so also; and hardly were they in safety, when the house fell from the top to the bottom. (*Bolland.*, January 26th.)

OCTOBER 16TH.

Meditation for the Sixteenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ASSISTANCE IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS.

Prelude.—After having contemplated our extreme misery, and the dangers which we run on the road of time to eternity, let us imagine that

God gives us, as He did formerly to Tobias, the guide who will save us.

Meditation.—There is, properly speaking, but one affair, which is the end of all others, the greatest and only end—the affair of our eternal salvation, and everything that does not tend to it is as nothing; this is what we must think and speak of on every occasion. O! in the eyes of faith, how contemptible are the honours, goods, and pleasures of this world; how unworthy of a Christian soul are things that pass away! Ah, indeed! the whole world and all that it contains of sweet and bitter does not deserve a passing glance from us; and we shall see clearly all these truths at the hour of death, which will soon come, for ere long we shall be surprised to find earth slipping away from us. How great, then, is the folly of the human heart to dwell on these things; and would to God that we never lost sight of that truth so constantly proclaimed by the books of Wisdom and the Holy Gospels, "the world and its vanities pass away;" would to God that we understood, once and for all, that perishable things should have no hold on our heart! Eternity! that is the only thought which should fill our mind; and we should then remember, and consider as the greatest of all, the services which help us to arrive at it, for it is indeed now that the angels' love for us shines out so marvellously, and that they show themselves our true friends. We shall see this in the two following meditations.

Resolution.—Accustom ourselves to see the relation between the events and things of this world with those of eternity.

Aspiration.—"I will send My angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared." (*Exod.* xxiii. 20.)

EXAMPLE.

THE LITTLE PROTÉGÉ OF THE ANGELS.

St. Neophytus, born at Nicea, of Christian parents, was singularly protected by the celestial spirits. When he was only nine years old, his mother saw a dove, white as snow, come and rest on his bed, speaking to him with a human voice, which shows that this bird was really an angel from heaven. And about this time he retired to Mount Olympus, guided by the same dove, and entered a cavern occupied by a savage beast, which his holy guide drove away; and there he took up his abode, where he lived five years, receiving from his angel the food which was necessary to him. At the age of eleven he descended the mountain to visit his parents, and to beg them to give the inheritance which would have been his to the poor; and three years later, conducted by his angel, he presented himself to the judge of the province, confessed his faith generously, and died for Jesus Christ. (*Bolland.*, January 20th.)

OCTOBER 17TH.

Meditation for the Seventeenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ASSISTANCE IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS (*continuation*).

Prelude.—We are in a path edged with thorns and precipices; but our angel holds our hand, and shows us the end of our journey.

Meditation.—These blessed spirits apply themselves with inconceivable zeal to procure us the life of grace, which is the life of a glorious eternity; and they have been seen, for this end, sweetly inducing apostolic men to preach the Gospel to people walking in the shadows of death, as we read in the lives of St. Paul and St. Francis Xavier; and they have even accompanied in a visible manner the divine workers who laboured to establish eternal life in souls. How many souls receive holy baptism through their charitable care, who would otherwise die, through the death of original sin, without their ministry! And these sweet spirits not only do not content themselves with procuring this thrice happy life of grace for us; but like the most loving mothers, they use the utmost care to preserve, sustain, and increase it for us; and for that reason they endeavour, with so much love, to make us receive often the adorable Body of

our good Master, Who is the Life of our life, and without Whom we cannot have true life.

They forget no possible means which can help our salvation and our eternal perseverance, and prayer being one of the most certain and useful means, it is by the ministry of angels that our prayers are presented at the throne of the Divine Majesty, and amongst all the exercises of the spiritual life, there are none in which they are more ready to help us. Mortification is the sister of Prayer, and these two companions are never separate. What do not these holy spirits do continually to establish us solidly in the practice of that virtue, which is so necessary that without it we can expect nothing from a soul, for it is certain that to be truly Christian we must be truly mortified.

Resolution.—Have recourse to the holy angels in our dryness and difficulties in prayer.

Aspiration.—"And there appeared to Him an angel from heaven strengthening Him." (*Gospel according to St. Luke*, xxiii. 43.)

EXAMPLE.

THE GRACE OF HOLY BAPTISM.

The Père de Loret of the Society of Jesus relates a remarkable instance of this. In the month of January of the year 1634, in Vienna (Austria), three souls delivered from Purgatory appeared to a religious of the same company, to

thank him, since by his prayers and mortifications they were going to enjoy eternal rest. "On the day of your birth," they said to him, "our good angels brought us the news, and promised us that one day you would be our liberator, which consoled us greatly. Besides, know that you are greatly indebted to your angel-guardian, for without him you would never have received baptism.

OCTOBER 18TH.

Meditation for the Eighteenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ASSISTANCE IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS (*continuation*).

Prelude.—Represent to ourselves our angel-guardian as a soldier, armed from head to foot, and standing at our side, to defend us from numerous and wicked enemies.

Meditation.—Angels are holily occupied in inspiring us with the love of all virtues, but especially the love of virginal purity, for that makes us like to them; "it makes us their brothers," says St. Cyprian, and causes us to enter more intimately into their holy friendship, and what do they not do to protect this lovely virtue, which, raising man above himself, makes him live an angelic life on earth.

But their love leads them especially to inspire us with a great love for the sweet Jesus, and our dear Mother Mary, knowing that this love is the soul of all virtues, so that they endeavour as much as they can to plant it firmly in our hearts. And because it is necessary for the practice of virtue to have an enlightened spirit and a mortified will, they do not fail in giving light to the mind, and generous feelings to the heart. It was through them that the old law was given, and the greatest truths of the new one have been manifested by these blessed spirits. Read the Old Testament, it is full of revelations made by the holy angels, and as to the new law they announced to the glorious Mother of God the adorable mystery of the Incarnation; to the shepherds who watched on the mountains of Bethlehem the birth of the Son of God; to St. Joseph the conception of the uncreated Word in the chaste womb of his virginal spouse, and the land to which he was to conduct the holy Infant to save it from Herod's persecution; to the Maries the resurrection of our Saviour; to the disciples His terrible coming at the day of judgment.

Resolution.—In the difficulties which we meet with in the practice of virtue, have recourse to the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"Purity makes man the brother of the angels." (*St. Cyprian.*)

EXAMPLE.

ST. DOMINIC AND THE ANGELS.

St. Dominic was one of the most fervent lovers of Jesus and Mary, and therefore the angels loved him. He received from them all kind of help during the long nights when he watched at the foot of the holy altar, and gave vent to the feelings of his heart in the presence of his good Master, in the most holy sacrament of the altar, and invoked the protection of the most holy Virgin. He was never tired of spending the night in prayer, and tried as much as possible to be in the presence of the adorable Eucharist, and the angels, overjoyed at this untiring love, united themselves to him, for those holy beings rejoiced in joining him. They were seen coming with torches to his rooms, opening the doors of the house and of the church, where they conducted him, and when it was time reconducting him in the same way. The servants of a bishop with whom he was staying having noticed this wonder, mentioned it to their prelate, who, having watched the holy man about the hour when this happened, he had the consolation of being a spectator of it, and of admiring the goodness of the heavenly spirits towards man. (*Boudon: Dévotion aux Neuf Chœurs des Anges.*)

OCTOBER 19TH.

Meditation for the Nineteenth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ASSISTANCE IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS (*continuation*).

Prelude.—Let us represent to ourselves our guardian-angel at our side, eagerly profiting by every moment to make us faithful to grace, and to increase in us that spiritual life which is his great preoccupation.

Meditation.—The holy angels omit nothing to keep us from sin, or to deliver us from it when we have unhappily fallen. Sometimes it is by the thought of paradise, hell, or eternity, sometimes by efficacious considerations on the fatal effects and consequences of sin; sometimes by clear thoughts of death or the shortness of life; sometimes by examples of the saints or the punishment of sinners, and these lights which often open suddenly the eyes of our soul to the greatest truths, these unexpected inspirations which touch us when we least expect them, and which impress us so deeply, come to us through the ministry of the holy angels.

There are happy moments when we feel our heart impelled to give itself to our loving God without any assignable cause. It may happen in the midst of recreation, of enjoyment, of a feast; sometimes even when, alas! we may have

resolved to commit a sin. And it is the angels to whom we owe this; if we, then, make good use of this happy inspiration, they obtain great graces for us from the mercy of God, whilst they prepare our senses, both interior and exterior. They suppress our passions, dispel obstacles in the way of grace, conquer the demons, and facilitate the use of means which enable us to respond to the call of God's Holy Spirit. They make known to us our great and little faults, and allow us to see our imperfections; they show us our most secret opposition to the inspirations of grace; they lead us to penance and a good confession, and excite us to satisfy Divine justice.

Resolution.—Have recourse to the holy angels amidst our difficulties in the way of conversion.

Aspiration.—"Holy angels, who dissipate our darkness and enlighten our understanding, pray for us." (*Litany of the Holy Angels.*)

EXAMPLE.

MANIFESTATION OF THE WILL OF GOD.

St. Paternian was Bishop of Fano when Diocletian issued his murderous edicts against the Christians. He was not afraid for himself, for he desired above all things to die for Jesus Christ, but he had disciples still young, whose weakness he feared. He felt, therefore, obliged to flee out of compassion for them; however, before taking this step, he besought of God, with

tears, to make known His Will to him, and after praying far into the night, he went to sleep. Then an angel came and said to him:

"Your prayer has ascended to heaven, and this is the answer of the Lord: 'Rise, leave the town, with your disciples, under cover of the night, and hide yourselves in the forest of Egi, where you will find a secure retreat and not be discovered."

The holy Bishop, awakened by this vision, called his disciples immediately and conducted them into the thick and obscure forest, where they spent the time of persecution, fed by angels and occupied in exercises of piety, and when God restored peace to His Church they returned to the town. (*Bolland.*, July 12th.)

OCTOBER 20TH.

Meditation for the Twentieth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

ASSISTANCE IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS (*end*).

Prelude.—Let us represent to ourselves our angel-guardian at our side, attentively warding us from the thorns and brambles of the roadside, and eagerly helping us to the means of persevering in the good road, at the extremity of which we see Paradise.

Meditation.—Finally, the assistance of the angels is most consoling. They animate and encourage us in difficulties, console us in our labours and sufferings, help us to persevere in virtue, obtain strength for us in troubles of spirit, and in the midst of scruples, and fill us with that joy and peace which the Holy Scripture says "passeth all understanding." For this, they establish in our souls even in the midst of the most violent storms and tempests which raise themselves against our will, in our senses and appetites, a peace which nothing can trouble. And, besides, it is proper to these blessed spirits to give joy and peace; and observe that when St. Raphael saluted young Tobias he wished him continual joy, and when he left him he wished him peace. O holy and blessed spirits! it is not your fault that peace does not reign in the interior of our souls, and if it does not reign there it is we ourselves who place the obstacle. And what obstacle? The love of created things—that disordered attachment which prevents it; for to be in peace and to enjoy peace always, we must be for God alone!

Resolution.—Examine ourselves on the attachments which prevent us from enjoying continual peace.

Aspiration.—"Peace on earth to men of good will." (*Hymn of the Angels at the Birth of our Lord.*)

EXAMPLE.

THE ANGELS' BLESSING.

St. Dorothea exhorting her religious to be in choir punctually, tells them the following story, which deserves to be related. An old religious saw one day in the church of his monastery, at the moment when the signal was given to begin the Divine Office, an unknown person who came out of the sacristy carrying some holy water and a sprinkler. He entered the choir, and gave holy water to all the religious present, and sprinkled also some of the empty stalls, missing others. He returned again at the end of the Office, and performed the same ceremony. This was repeated several days following, and the old religious stopped him one day on the way, and asked him who he was, and why he acted thus.

"I am an angel," he answered, "and God sends me here to bless those whose fervour brings them to the Office, and induces them to remain to the end."

"Permit me, dear angel, to ask you," said the religious, "why you bless also the places of some who are absent, and not others?"

"Because," said the angel, "among the absent some are often detained by obedience; those deserve to be blessed as if they were present: but I cannot bless those cowards who are absent from negligence, they are unworthy of this favour." (*Bolland.*, June 5th.)

OCTOBER 21ST.

Meditation for the Twenty-first Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

PROTECTION AGAINST THE DEVILS.

Prelude.—An immense plain stretches itself before us, and the entrances are guarded by ferocious enemies, but an angel marches at our side.

Meditation.—"Our whole life," says St. Bernard, "is but a temptation," and this great doctor had borrowed the thought and the doctrine from our holy books. Temptation from outside, from creatures, from within, from our equals, from ourselves. It is strange that we should be such dangerous enemies to ourselves, that we are obliged to be on our guard, and to be afraid of ourselves, since our loss, according to the prophet, comes from ourselves, who often work with all our might for our ruin; but we have other combats to wage against enemies powerful by their strength, cruel in their rage, terrible by their stratagems, innumerable in their multitude, and untiring in their pursuits. Add to this, that our enemies are purely spirits, who strike without being seen, who enter everywhere, who remain invisible, and watch everything that we do; who fight against weak souls, walking in the midst of dark night, advancing by slippery paths, where they can hardly stand,

surrounded on all sides by fearful precipices, and threatened with evils which are endless, and terrible in their intensity.

O, if men meditated well these great truths, if they would see the supernatural light, how they would change their lives! then, indeed, they would serve God in holy fear, and their hearts would be rent with terror at the frightful evils to which we are exposed, and alas! we think so little. This meditation must renew our gratitude and affection to the holy angels, for it is especially here that their power and protection shines in all its splendour.

Resolution.—Have recourse to the holy angels in temptations.

Aspiration.—"Then the angel Raphael took the devil and bound him." (*Tobias*, viii. 3.)

EXAMPLE.

ANGELIC CONCERTS.

St. Wilsorade, hermit and martyr of St. Gall, in Switzerland, had a sister, who even in her youth was a model of innocence and simplicity. One day she was invited by some young girls of her neighbourhood to take a share in their gaieties, but she had received from Heaven, at the same time, a much sweeter invitation. She was seen, all at once, to raise her eyes to heaven and gaze attentively at something, with an expression of heavenly joy; then they heard her

say in sighing, "What is there in common with me and the vain amusements which are suggested to me? I see in heaven an enchanting sight, and I hear the sweet harmony of angelic concerts; these are the pleasures after which my heart sighs; it is there that I desire to go soon." She could say no more, for tears choked her utterance, and a few days later she was no more. (*Bolland.*, May 2nd.)

OCTOBER 22ND.

Meditation for the Twenty-second Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

PROTECTION AGAINST THE DEVILS (*continuation.*)

Prelude.—The devils declare war against us, but the angels fight for us, and support us.

Meditation.—God has far more desire to save us, than hell has rage to damn us; and as He knows perfectly our impotence in the excess of His divine mercy, He gives us help proportioned to our weakness; and whilst hell seeks continually our ruin, His eyes are always watching mercifully over our protection, and by a Providence which the Church admirably calls ineffable, He sends us the blessed angels of His heavenly court to help us in the struggles which we must have against those powers, whose force would

assuredly crush us without a special and particular protection.

"The soul," says St. Bernard, "is sometimes in such trouble, the spirit feels so weary, the heart is in such fearful anguish, the body so violently afflicted, and temptations so dreadful, that without great help we should fall. And then," adds the Father, "the soul requires to be assisted by the angels; she needs the consolation of these holy spirits, for fainting, she cannot walk, and the angels must carry her in their arms."

Yes, in this state the angels support our soul, and make it cross so gently the dangers which it even dreads the most, that it hardly sees or notices them. We must walk over aspics and basilisks, we must trample under foot lions and dragons, so that it is most necessary to have angels for masters and guides, and most necessary that they should carry us, for we shall easily pass those dangerous roads if we are carried by their hands. So what can we fear? Angels are faithful, wise, and powerful, and it is sufficient for us to follow, and not to separate ourselves from them.

Resolution.—Renew our confidence in the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"He hath sent an angel who has brought us out of Egypt." (*Numbers*, xx. 16.)

EXAMPLE.

THE LADDER OF LIGHT.

St. Coletta had suffered much through the persecution of infernal spirits; for the more Jesus Christ was pleased to load her with His favours, the more frequent and terrible their assaults became; but her faithful Spouse took care to fortify her by powerful consolations.

Here is an example. In one of her journeys she received generous hospitality from a rich lady, and the furious demons projected nothing less than to overthrow the house from top to bottom. Warned of this design by revelation, she took refuge in prayer, which she prolonged till midnight; then she saw a ladder of light which reached to heaven, and she beheld a multitude of celestial spirits, who ranged themselves in battle array around the house, and sheltered it from every insult. One of her religious was witness of this wonder, and testified to it juridically, on the death of this servant of God.

OCTOBER 23RD.

Meditation for the Twenty-third Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

PROTECTION AGAINST THE DEVILS (*end*).

Prelude.—The crowd of devils is always threatening, but let us address ourselves with confidence to our Mighty Defender.

Meditation.—"Every time that you feel yourselves weighed down by some great temptation or affliction," says St. Bernard, "have recourse to your good angel, and say to him, 'Sweet angel, save me, for I am on the point of being lost.'" Nevertheless, we must not let ourselves be discouraged by the number and power of our enemies, but let us repeat with the prophet Eliseus: "Fear not; for there are more with us than with them." And this thought is very true, and well calculated to console us in our troubles; let us meditate on it. Finally, we must know that a single devil, if God allowed him, could make all men perish, no matter what opposition they used; but let us know also that a single angel of heaven is more powerful, because of the virtue and strength which God gives him, than all the devils together; and let us also remember that these happy spirits watch over our protection with a goodness which surpasses all thought, and that the devils fear them in an extraordinary degree. The reason of this is, that as the good angels fought generously for the cause of God against the apostates, they have deserved a particular dominion over these rebels. Another consideration also torments the devils extremely, and that is, that like the good angels, they had the option of attaining the glory from which they have so unhappily fallen, and the sight of the happiness which the angels possess, and of which they are themselves deprived, fills them with a terrible rage.

O sweet princes of Paradise, how necessary and loving is your protection! Realise for me what the Holy Scriptures say, that is, that you bind the demons. Frustrate their power of tormenting us, and dragging us into the abyss, where they would like us to share their damnation.

Resolution.—Place in the hands of our dear angel-guardian the care of protecting us from all the attacks of the demons.

Aspiration.—"Fear not. We have more for us than against us. (*Words of the Prophet Eliseus.*)

EXAMPLE.

ILLUSIONS DISSIPATED.

Here are some instances drawn from the life of the blessed Veronica of Binasco. One night, whilst she was alone meditating, in her room, on the Passion of Our Lord, the darkness was all at once dispersed by a celestial light, which frightened her at first, and then filled her with ineffable delight. This prodigy being renewed on two following nights, she feared it might be an illusion of the spirit of lies, for she could not imagine that Heaven would work miracles in her favour, and she prayed that God would not allow her to be deceived by a false light. Some time after, she felt an ardent desire to retire into a desert, so as to serve God with more liberty; and she profited by the silence of the night to examine

this project leisurely, and to consult the Holy Spirit in prayer, so that having extinguished her lamp, she began her prayer. Soon an angel appeared to her, radiant with light, and he said, to calm her fear, "Fear not. I am the heavenly messenger, who comes to enlighten you spiritually. The light which caused you so much alarm came from God, but it is not so with the thought which occupies you, for this project of retiring into the desert is neither conformable to His Will nor to your salvation." After having said this, he flew back to heaven, leaving her very joyous, and yet sad, that his conversation had been so short. (*Bolland.*, January 13th.)

OCTOBER 24TH.

Meditation for the Twenty-fourth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

Prelude.—Let us imagine that we have arrived at the fearful moment on which our eternity depends, and let us turn to our angel, who will assist us at our last moments.

Meditation.—We recognise true friendship in times of affliction, or when we are in great desolation. Now, what affliction is equal to death? If then the holy angels render us great services

at this terrible hour, we shall then experience what true friends they are to us. All earthly creatures leave us, not one can come and defend us at God's judgment, and the greatest friendships of this world end with death. It is a special privilege of angelical love to last beyond death itself, and Our Lord has revealed that souls who have a particular devotion to the holy angels during their earthly life, will receive from them assistance and extraordinary help at the hour of death; and that is only just, for it is then that our dear Lord will reward the worthy reception of His ambassadors. His honour is concerned in it, for the good or bad treatment shown to the envoys of a king is the same as if shown to himself, and an insult to an ambassador is a valid reason for war.

How happy those souls will be at the hour of death who, by their faithful correspondence to the holy inspirations of these spirits of love, by the love and devotion which they have had for these beings so full of charity, will deserve to receive from them special assistance and a glorious reward from God.

Resolution.—Invoke the holy angels often, to obtain the grace of a happy death.

Aspiration.—Holy angel, preserve us from the surprise of a sudden death.

EXAMPLE.

VISIBLE ASSISTANCE.

Tryphon and Respicius, although very young, still led a virtuous and exemplary life. Aquilin, governor of Bithynia, to whom they belonged, caused them to be arrested; and as they continued firm in their faith he ordered them to be tortured, so they were tormented for three days without giving the least sign of weakness or allowing a single complaint to escape them. The judge, irritated at their constancy, had them cruelly scourged, and afterwards he told the executioners to tear their sides with nails of iron and to burn their wounds with heated lamps. During this horrible torture an angel came to then, holding in his hands crowns ornamented with precious stones and flowers, which he placed on their heads, exhorting them to fight valiantly till death; but the executioners, witnesses of this miracle, were so terrified that they fell to the ground without consciousness and almost without life. (*D. Ruynart: Inuter sincera et secura*, p. 162, No. 5.)

OCTOBER 25TH.

Meditation for the Twenty-fifth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

AFTER DEATH.

Prelude.—Our soul has just left our body. Behold it alone, surprised, afraid! The tribunal is ready—the Judge appears—but an angel comes to our assistance.

Meditation.—After death the holy angels themselves present our souls before the tribunal of God, and they come to plead the great cause of our eternity. O! how good it will be then to have such eloquent and zealous advocates. If the sentence is favourable and sends us immediately to heaven, the holy angels, filled with joy accompany us to glory; if there still remains something for us to expiate, they visit us in Purgatory, and do everything that can be expected from the most loving and constant friendship. They console souls, but in the manner of angels, by celestial consolation of which all the joys of this world are but shadows and figures; they procure their relief or deliverance by the prayers which they inspire men to say for them, by Masses, alms, and mortifications.

Finally, the learned Doctor Suarez says that they collect, at the day of judgment, the ashes

of those of whom they have been the guardians on earth.

Resolution.—Serve the angels, to implore their assistance which we desire after our death.

Aspiration.—" Holy angels, who release from purgatory souls sufficiently purified, pray for us." (*Litany of the Holy Angels.*)

EXAMPLE.

ST. ANTHONY AND THE ANGELS.

One day, St. Anthony, Abbot, began to pray before taking his repast, when he had an ecstasy and was carried on high by the hand of angels; but the devils blocked the passage, saying he could not pass.

" Why should he not pass?" asked the angels; " his conscience, is it not pure and free from all sin?"

" No," answered the demons, and they began to enumerate the faults of his youth.

" It is no longer question of that," replied his celestial guides, " those are all pardoned;" and, putting the devils to flight immediately, they introduced him into the light of contemplation.

Later, when he felt himself to be dying, he called around him his disciples and gave them his last counsels; then stretching himself on his mat he waited patiently for his last hour. All at once his countenance became joyful, and he looked around him affectionately, as if he had

seen friends who came to visit him, so that most probably they were angels come from heaven to carry off his soul, for at that instant he gave up his last breath. (*Bolland.*, January 17th.)

OCTOBER 26TH.

Meditation for the Twenty-sixth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

DEVOTION TO OUR ANGEL-GUARDIAN.

Prelude.—Our angel-guardian watches at our side, and sees all our proceedings and our wants.

Meditation.—It would indeed be very difficult to help having a particular devotion to our good angel-guardians, for we should need to have neither intelligence nor heart not to feel an entire and perfect gratitude towards them. Let us honour very much all angel-guardians, and first of all those of infidels, and let us go in spirit to converse with them, keep them company, and express our regrets for the infidelity of the souls they guard, and who do not even know of their presence at their side. Let us do the same for the angel-guardians of heretics and poor ignorant beings, who have no more light about the holy angels than those who live in the midst of infidel lands.

Let us venerate and love the angel-guardians of our friends; they render us on many occasions great services, and as demons strive to unite bad friendships, so the holy angels omit nothing to unite together persons who give themselves to God.

Let us pray to the good angels of our spiritual directors, so that they may inspire them with pure counsels, conformed to the Divine Will.

Let us also offer our homage to the angel-guardians of our parents, of persons with whom we may have business, of our benefactors, because it was their holy angels who inspired them to help us; of our enemies, that they may bless their hearts.

Let us venerate equally the angel-guardians of kingdoms, provinces, towns, and villages, where we live, or through which we pass.

It is also a holy practice to implore the aid of the angels of the diocese in which we are, of the prelate who governs it, and of his co-operators, so that they may obtain the establishment of the reign of Jesus Christ in the faithful who are subject to them, the destruction of the empire of Satan, and also the necessary light to govern the diocese holily.

Resolution.—Renew our devotion to the holy angel-guardians.

Aspiration—"Holy angel-guardians, pray for us." (*Litany of the Holy Angels.*)

EXAMPLE.

THE ANGEL OF THE CRUSADES.

Cardinal Baronius (1146) thought it was an angel who saved the army of Crusaders on the occasion of which I am going to speak, and it was also the opinion of William of Tyre, as his narrative insinuates (Book xvi. ch. xii. and xiii). And, in reality, the event cannot be explained in any other way. The Crusaders had advanced into the enemy's country, and found themselves in such an awkward position that no safety was left them except by retreat; but to escape from the Saracens, who had blocked the roads, it was necessary to know the by-ways, and they had no guide at their disposition.

However, the army began its march, and immediately at the head of the vanguard was seen an unknown knight, mounted on a white horse, encased in brilliant armour, and holding a red banner in his hand. He conducted them by short paths, where they found water in abundance, pointed out the best places for encampment, and conducted them in three days to Gadara, which, without him, they could not have attained in five days' march. What finally proves that it was an angel, was, that he disappeared every evening, for he could never be found in the camp, and reappeared in the morning at the hour of departure. The army was saved by him

from an almost certain ruin. (*Bolland.*, September 29th.)

OCTOBER 27TH.

Meditation for the Twenty-seventh Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE LAST HIERARCHY.

Prelude.—Let us penetrate in spirit into heaven and admire the perfect order of the angelic choirs, and recollect ourselves before the splendour of the hierarchies.

Meditation.—The three choirs of the third and last hierarchy of the angels, are the angels, archangels, and principalities. This hierarchy is more especially deputed for the service of men, kingdoms, provinces, and, in a word, for all that helps the good of man.

Our guardian-angels are generally taken from the third choir of this hierarchy, archangels guard empires and provinces, and the principalities communicate to the angels and archangels the orders of Divine Providence, which they receive from the second hierarchy. Angels manifest God's Will in ordinary things, and archangels in more important ones, and both receive light from the principalities, who represent in a special manner the empire and sovereignty of God.

We must be devout to the angels to obtain purity of body and heart, charity towards our neighbour and patience; to the archangels to obtain zeal for the glory of God for ourselves and for others, but more especially for the princes of the Church and of the State; to the principalities to obtain the reformation of our interior; for man is a little world, and he must command his passions, and govern them as king, but, as his power is much weakened by sin, he has need of being supported, so that he may not be conquered. The principalities will therefore give him very great and very powerful help, if he tries not to be unworthy of it.

Resolution.—Be faithful to the practices which have just been suggested to us.

Aspiration.—Principalities, archangels, angels, pray for us.

EXAMPLE.

THE UNKNOWN ONE.

St. John Gualbert, Abbot of Vallombreuse, being on his death-bed, saw near him his angel-guardian without knowing him. Taking him for a strange religious, because he resembled one, he asked his religious if they had carefully acquitted themselves of the duties of hospitality towards him; but they, to whom the angel was invisible, did not understand what the saint meant, and consequently asked of what strange religious he spoke. "I speak of that one," he

said, pointing him out with his finger; "tell me from whence he comes, and how he is called?" A holy Abbot who was present, enlightened by revelation of the presence of the angel, answered, "He is called Benignus, and he comes from the mountain of God." The holy old man understood then that this young man was an angel who came to fetch him, to introduce him to heaven, so that after having paid him homage, and testified his tender gratitude to God, he slept the sleep of the just. (*Bolland.*, July 12th.)

OCOTBER 28TH.

Meditation for the Twenty-eighth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE SECOND HIERARCHY.

Prelude.—Let us penetrate further into heaven, and, after having rendered our homage to the lowest hierarchy, let us prostrate ourselves before the angels of the second hierarchy.

Meditation.—The second hierarchy is composed of Powers, Virtues, and Dominations. Dominations give God's orders; Virtues, the strength to execute them; and Powers resist the demons who oppose them. And, as it is through the Dominations that we learn God's Will, let us have for these beautiful spirits a great devotion,

since the knowledge of God's Will is of such importance in the way of perfection. But it is not enough to know His Will, we must also fulfil it, so in our weakness and faint-heartedness let us invoke the Virtues, who will help us to conform our will to that of God. It is especially to the choir of Powers that God has given power to destroy all the efforts of malignant spirits, and one of the best practices of the spiritual life should be to apply oneself carefully to honour the blessed angels of this choir; and this devotion is one of the most necessary and advantageous of all. When we see storms rise up against Church and State, revolt and opposition against those who work for God's glory, etc., we must implore the aid of these Powers of heaven, so that they may destroy and overthrow all powers and wicked demons of hell.

Resolution.—Fidelity to the practices which have been suggested to us.

Aspiration.—Powers, Virtues, and Dominations, pray for us.

EXAMPLE.

ST. FRANCES OF ROME.

When, after her husband's death, St. Frances of Rome had retired to the Monastery of Tour-des-Miroirs, God gave her another angel, superior to the one who had assisted her up to then, for he belonged to the choir of Powers; he appeared to her also under a human form, and as his

beauty much surpassed that of the archangel, so also his dominion over the devil was easier and more feared: the archangel made use of a gesture to chase them, but a single look of the other was sufficient to put them to flight, and his glory was so dazzling that Frances could not look at him as she did at the other. This glorious spirit held in his hand three golden branches, like branches of palm, and occupied himself in a mysterious work, of which we can see the explication in the life of this saint, and also the account of many other angelic favours which cannot find place here. (*Bolland.*)

OCTOBER 29TH.

Meditation for the Twenty-ninth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE FIRST HIERARCHY.

Prelude.—Let us still ascend and lose ourselves in the depth and magnificence of the three first choirs of angels.

Meditation.—The first hierarchy is composed of Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones, and it receives directly the light of God, which it communicates to the other hierarchies. The Seraphim excel in pure love of God, and their name also signifies fire and love. Science is

specially attributed to the Cherubim, and St. Gregory assures us that they possess the plenitude of heavenly science. The Thrones are thus called from their sublime elevation. If it is just to have great respect for all the angels of heaven, we must have it particularly towards this sublime hierarchy, and let us ask of the Thrones peace with God, peace with men, peace with ourselves. Let us ask of the Cherubim the science of the saints, and the knowledge of virtue. Let us ask of the Seraphim the love of God. The saints who have most excelled in the practice of this love have received from them most special assistance—like St. Francis of Assisi and St. Theresa. It was a Seraphim who imprinted on the body of St. Francis the sacred stigmata of Our Saviour's wounds, and it was a seraphim who pierced so lovingly, with a sacred arrow, the generous heart of the glorious Theresa.

Resolution.—Be faithful to the practices which have been suggested to us.

Aspiration.—Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim, pray for us.

EXAMPLE.

INSPIRED PREACHING.

St. Paulinus relates in his life of St. Ambrose that an Arian, present at his sermon, saw an angel who whispered in his ear, so that the holy doctor only repeated to his audience what was

dictated to him by the holy spirit. Convinced by this vision of the truth of the Catholic doctrine, he embraced it and became one of its most zealous advocates.

OCTOBER 30TH.

Meditation for the Thirtieth Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

THE SEVEN ANGELS WHO STAND AROUND THE THRONE OF GOD.

Prelude.—Penetrate in spirit even to the throne of God, and, after having adored His infinite Majesty, let us render to the seven angels who surround Him the special homage which is due to them.

Meditation.—There are seven princes close to the God of all majesty, as Holy Scripture teaches us, and these seven angels are St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and four others whose names we ignore.

St. Michael is the tutelar archangel of the Church and the patron of France. He it is who assists souls at their death, and introduces them to heaven. Let us pray to him under all these invocations.

St. Gabriel, chosen by God to announce to Mary the mystery of the Incarnation, had the

immense honour of assisting the august Queen of Angels during her whole life.

Self-love being the great obstacle to the reign of God's love in a soul, it is well to remark here that St. Michael was chosen by the Most High to destroy this self-love, and St. Gabriel to establish the love of God.

St. Raphael was sent to accompany young Tobias on his perilous journey to Gabelus. Let us often have recourse to him in our journeys, and not forget that, in the order of Providence, it seems as if God wished to make use of this angel to assist pilgrims and travellers.

Finally, let us confide ourselves to the seven angels who are around the throne of God, so that they may obtain for us grace to avoid the seven mortal sins, and enjoy the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Resolution.—Honour with a particular devotion the seven angels who surround the throne of God.

Aspiration.—"All ye holy angels who stand upon the high and lofty throne of God, pray for us." (*Litany of the Holy Angels.*)

EXAMPLE.

DEVOTION TO THE SEVEN ANGELS WHO SURROUND THE THRONE OF GOD.

The Père de Barri relates that a church was dedicated to God, in honour of the seven princes who stand by His throne, at Palermo, capital of

Sicily; and that there was another in Rome, dedicated by Julius III.; that there was also a confraternity erected in their honour in the town of Palermo of which we speak. He says, moreover, that particular symbols were assigned to them, to teach painters how to depict them; and that we see them represented most beautifully in that same town of Palermo, Antwerp, and in other places. St. Michael, trampling Lucifer under his feet, carries in his left hand a green branch, and holds in his right a spear, at the point of which is a banner white as snow, with a scarlet cross in the midst. St. Gabriel appears with a torch shut in a lantern, which he holds in his right hand; the left is occupied in showing a mirror of green jasper, strewn with spots of different colours. St. Raphael is known by having in his mouth a fish, in his left hand a box, and conducting young Tobias by his right hand. Uriel, the fourth angel, holds in his right hand a naked sword, and his left, which is hanging, is surrounded with flames. The fifth has the attitude of a suppliant, with his eyes humbly lowered. The sixth has a gold crown in his right hand, and a whip, with three black strings, in his left. The seventh has at the end of his cloak, which is folded back, a quantity of white roses. I wished to recount these emblems of the angels, as perhaps it may inspire some one with the idea of painting them; and it is quite certain that the sight even of pictures or statues of angels leads to purity and the love of heaven.

OCTOBER 31ST.

Meditation for the Thirty-first Day of the Month of the Holy Angels.

Recapitulation.—Let us recall to-day the principal thoughts which have struck us during this holy month, and let us address a special prayer to each choir of this angelic militia.

Let us ask from the Angels faith, which is the principle and foundation of the spiritual life.

Let us ask of the Archangels zeal for the glory of God.

Let us ask of the Principalities the preservation and increase of faith, the annihilation of sin, and reformation of the morals for the Christian people.

Let us ask the Powers for help against the strength of the demons.

Let us ask the Virtues for assistance in overcoming the difficulties which the flesh and the world constantly place in our way, and a holy generosity in the practice of Christian virtues.

Let us ask of the Dominations to make known to us the orders of God, what He asks of us, and to show us His holy Will.

Let us ask the Thrones to obtain for us a perfect submission to the Will of God, so that we may enjoy that peace which passeth all understanding.

Let us ask the Cherubim for the establishment of the light of Jesus Christ in our hearts, and the avoidance of all worldly maxims which are opposed to Him.

Let us ask the Seraphim for the reign and triumph of divine love in our hearts.

Resolution.—Have the firm resolution of making again, next year, the exercises of the month of October in honour of the holy angels.

Aspiration.—"The holy angel of the Lord be with you in your journey, and bring you through safe." (*Tobias* x. 11.)

EXAMPLE.

SAINT REDEMPTA.

"I knew," says St. Gregory, "in the town of Rome, a virgin named Romula, who had for disciples Redempta and Hirunda, also virgins, but much younger than she was; they all three lived together very piously, and much alone. One night Redempta called her mistress, saying to her, 'Come mother, come quickly.' Romula, frightened at this appeal, came promptly, and Hirunda did the same, and both ran to Redempta, who was ill and wanted help, and when they had rendered her the necessary services they seated themselves by her bed, in case she required anything. About midnight a celestial light penetrated into the room and filled it with such brightness that Romula and Hirunda were

alarmed, so much so that they felt faint; but having raised their hearts to God, they became calm, when a second wonder renewed their fear. They heard a noise in the house as of people entering in crowds; the door of the room opened, and they felt steps walking around them, but they saw nothing, for their eyes were obscured by fear, and dazzled with the brightness of celestial light. A delicious odour was then felt, which persuaded them that these could be none other than glorious spirits, which thought reassured them. At last the invalid, who till then had kept the most profound silence, said to Romula: 'Fear nothing, my mother, I shall not die now.' And from that moment the light diminished gradually, and finally disappeared, but for three days the air of the room was fragrant. The following night the invalid called her mother again, and asked for the sacraments, which were administered to her, and immediately an admirable concert was heard outside the room; there were voices of men and women who chanted alternately together, and during this time Redempta gave up her soul; then the singing grew fainter and fainter, till at last it ceased altogether." (*Dialogue* iv. 15.)

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE NINE CHOIRS OF ANGELS.

TAKEN FROM THE WORKS OF M. HENRI MARIE BOUDON.

To be recited on the last Day of the Exercises of the Month of the Holy Angels.

Blessed spirits of the heavenly court, invincible defenders of the interests of God! after having praised, adored, blessed and thanked this God of all goodness for the incomparable graces which He has bestowed on you, after having made as earnestly as possible a sincere protestation of this, rejoicing in your joys, and in the unspeakable glory which you possess; after having besought you to accept the inviolable resolution which we make, to have for you all the rest of our life a very special devotion, to procure by every means in our power the establishment and augmentation of it, we implore your help in the coming of the reign of the most adorable Jesus, so that all people making profession of one faith may attach themselves to the purity of its maxims, lead a life conformable to its rules, and that the sacred interests of God alone may be maintained in all hearts. This is what we ask of the Father of all mercies, by your powerful intercession, O princes of the heavenly army, so that the empire of

sin and the devils may not be eternal, that the Gospel may be preached to all nations, that the holy name of God may be adored and glorified, that all hearts may praise God, that they may honour Him, and be in perfect submission to His holy Will. Come then, Angels and Archangels, hasten to establish everywhere the reign of God in town and country. Holy Principalities, govern all hearts, and be the masters to subject them to the empire of Jesus and Mary. Admirable Powers, confound the demons who oppose it, ruin the designs of hell, and all the enemies of God. Divine Virtues, make souls walk in the solid road of Divine love. Glorious Dominations, show men God's holy Will towards them. Sweet Thrones, establish firmly in our hearts the peace which Our Lord has left us. Cherubim, doctors of the science of saints, communicate its sweet light to earth. And you, Seraphim, princes of pure love, grant that men live only in its flames, so that God alone may be glorified for ever and ever. Amen.

PRACTICES AND PRAYERS IN HONOUR OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

PRACTICES OF DEVOTION TOWARDS THE HOLY ANGELS.

I. It would be well to have in one's room or in one's prayer-book the picture of an angel, and

to look at it sometimes attentively and affectionately. It is a very useful way of feeding the gratitude, confidence, and love which we owe them, and of raising us to spiritual things. I will relate on this subject an instructive dialogue which took place under the reign of Leo, the Armenian, between him and St. Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople.

"I wish very much to know," said this iconoclastic prince, "why you make images and statues, contrary to the law of God. Has He not said, 'Thou shalt not make graven images, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven?"

"Finish the sentence, Prince," answered the Patriarch, and you will see that it is forbidden to make them to adore them. Now, we do not adore images, we make them to recall to our mind the sacred objects of our devotion, to renew our love for them, and recall their examples, and give more fervour to the prayers with which we address them. It is true that we give them honour, which, however, is relative and not absolute, and our homage is for the objects which they represent."

"But," said the Emperor, "you represent God and the angels. What is more absurd than to attempt to represent spirits?"

"As regards God," said the Patriarch, "we only follow your example; for you, Emperor, say—and I am far from denying it—that you are the representative of Divinity; but we have a still higher authority. When Adam was created,

did not God say, 'Let us make man to our own image and likeness'? So you see, Prince, man is the likeness of God; why, then, do you blame us for representing Him under human features. It is true that spiritual man resembles God, and that we represent Him under the form of a corporal man; but one suggests the other. As to the angels, if we lend them the human form, it is because we are authorised by Holy Scripture."

"Where have you seen that?" said the Emperor. "Quote the texts."

"Nothing is easier," replied the Patriarch. "The angels who appeared to Abraham and Lot were in a human form, and so also was the angel who wrestled with Jacob, and he who appeared to Josue in the plains of Jericho. This is the example we do but follow."

"All very well," returned the Emperor; "but you have added the grotesque, that of giving them wings."

"This idea, again, comes to us from the Holy Books," answered the Patriarch. "Do you not remember, Prince, that the Cherubim covered the propitiatory with their wings? and it was God, nevertheless, who commanded them to do this. And we must own that this figure is not without instruction for us: it teaches us that, in reality, these glorious spirits are celestial messengers, charged to present our prayers to God, and to bring us His blessings. Besides, the relative honour paid to these images, and customary from

the beginning, was approved, in the eighth century, at the second Council of Nicea; and again, latterly, by the holy Council of Trent." (*Bolland.*, March 13th.)

II. St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi had a practice of devotion to the angels, which had been taught her in an ecstasy. I will mention it here, as it seems to me both beautiful and important.

VISIT TO THE NINE CHOIRS.

I will go to the choir of Angels, and ask of them the spirit of humility.

From them, I will go to the choir of Archangels, whom I will entreat to obtain for me an inviolable purity.

I will ascend to the choir of Principalities, to obtain, by their intercession, perfect obedience, not only to God, but to all creatures to please God.

I will raise myself to the choir of Powers, and implore of them to beg their Divine Master to grant me grace to restrain my sensual appetites.

I will respectfully approach the choir of Virtues, and implore of their generous charity perseverance and progress in good.

From them, I will run to the choir of Dominations, and beg their powerful intercession to obtain a real dominion over my passions and the affections which terrestrial objects excite in me.

I will visit the choir of Thrones, and solicit from their love of the Incarnate Word all the dispositions which can render my heart an agreeable dwelling for His Divine Majesty.

I will go to the choir of Cherubim, to seek light to discern celestial inspirations, and even the slightest sins.

Finally, I will dare to advance as far as the choir of Seraphim, to take from them the sacred fire of a love, pure and detached from every personal interest. I will, then, take care to admit nothing into my heart which will diminish the purity of my love.

III. We must, at least morning and evening, implore the protection of our tutelar angels, and offer them the tribute of homage which we owe them.

IV. It is wise to consult them in our difficulties and enterprises; for it is through them that we receive the celestial light which teaches us what God wills or desires, and what is expedient for our salvation.

V. Why should we not also entrust to them the offering of our prayers to God, to obtain for us all necessary graces?

VI. But it is especially in temptation that we must call them to our aid, knowing, as we do, their power over the devils. If I do not speak more strongly of these counsels, it is but because they are the fruits of what my readers have seen in this work.

VII. Let us accustom ourselves to salute interiorly the angels of persons who visit us, or whom we visit, and those of the churches which we meet with when we travel.

VIII. It would also be a good action to ren-

der some habitual homage, every Tuesday for instance, to the angels of the church, kingdom, diocese, and parish to which we belong; and to those of pagans, heretics, and so many ungrateful Catholics, who refuse them even the least remembrance.

NOVENA TO OUR ANGEL-GUARDIAN,

BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 23RD.

Deus in adjutorium. Gloria Patri.

I.

O most powerful angel, thou who art my guardian, I beseech thee, by the sovereign hatred thou hast for sin, because it offends God, Whom you love with a pure and perfect love, obtain for me a sincere and lasting sorrow for my sins, and an implacable hatred against all sin, of what kind soever, so that I may never more offend my God, till the last moment of my life.

Pater. Ave. Gloria Patri.

II.

Most mighty spirit, my angel-guardian, I pray thee, by that supreme felicity thou dost enjoy in seeing God without a veil, even whilst watching over me, obtain for me grace to walk without ceasing in the presence of God, so that I may live a perfect Christian till my last breath.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

III.

Most perfect executor of the Will of God, my faithful guardian, I pray thee, by the vigilant and loving eagerness with which thou fulfillest the duty of my guardianship which God has confided to thee, obtain for me the grace of being always anxious to know and accomplish perfectly to the last moment of my life, everything that God asks of me.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

IV.

My most zealous protector and dear angel-guardian, I pray thee, by the charge which God hath given thee to guard me in all my ways, as a mother carries in her arms her beloved child, avert from me all occasions of sin, and preserve me from all perils which could make me offend God, and for that, repress the temptations of the infernal enemy and my own passions, so that having conquered the enemies of my salvation, I may walk with ease, by the grace of God, in the way of His commandments, till I die.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

V.

Most faithful guide, my angel-guardian, I pray thee, by the mission which God has confided to thee to lead me on the road to heaven, obtain for me grace to follow faithfully and constantly the light which thou hast shown me, of the evil which I must avoid, and of the good which I must do, and do not cease to excite me to the practice of all virtue, till the last moment of my life.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

VI.

Dearest friend, my good angel, I pray thee, by the great love thou hast for me, thou who lovest God so ardently, and who seest how much He loved me and still loves me, obtain for me the consolation of always praying and praying well in my troubles, so that I may obtain His mercy, till the last moment of my existence.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

VII.

Most powerful intercessor, my faithful guardian, I pray thee, by the zeal which God hath given thee for the eternal salvation of my soul, obtain for me the grace of having also an ardent and prudent zeal for the salvation of my neighbour, so that I may merit eternal salvation.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

VIII.

O! most pure spirit, dear angel-guardian, I pray thee, by the burning love thou hast for the Immaculate Virgin-Mother of God, the Queen of Angels, to obtain for me great purity of soul and body, that at my death I may be found worthy to associate with thee in Paradise.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

IX.

O sweetest angel, my faithful and loving guardian, how can I thank thee sufficiently for the ardent love and faithful vigilance with which thou hast ever watched, and will watch over me,

till thou hast led me safely into the sweet presence of God. Ah! pray for me, that I may thank thee by my obedience to thy holy inspirations, so that loving thee daily more and more, I may merit to be with thee for all eternity.

Pater. Ave. Gloria.

Ant. Sancti angeli, custodes nostri, defendite nos in prælio, ut non pereamus in tremendo judicio.

Ant. O ye holy angels, our guardians, defend us in the day of battle that we may not be lost in the dreadful judgment.

V. Angelis suis Deus mandavit de te.

V. God hath given His angels charge concerning thee.

R. Ut custodiant te in omnibus viis tuis.

R. To keep thee in all thy ways.

Oremus.

Deus qui ineffabili providentia sanctos angelos tuos ad nostram custodiam mittere dignaris; largire supplicibus tuis, et eorum semper protectione defendi, et æterna societate gaudere. Per Christum. Amen.

Prayer.

O God, who in Thine unspeakable providence vouchsafest to send Thine angels to keep guard over us, grant unto Thy suppliants that we may be continually defended by their protection, and rejoice eternally in their society. Through our Lord, etc. Amen.

ROSARY OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

On the Cross is said the Credo, or Te Deum, then the Lord's Prayer, and the Hail Mary. Afterwards, on the large beads, the Gloria Patri or the Hail Mary, and on all the smaller beads, the "Angele Dei," or for those who do not know this short prayer: "My good angel, I love, and will love you." If it is said in honour of the nine choirs, these words can be said instead: "Holy angels, I love, and will love you."

PRAYER TO OUR ANGEL-GUARDIAN.

Angele Dei, qui custos es mei, me tibi commissum pietate superna, hodie et quotidie illumina, custodi, rege et guberna.

Angel of God, who art my guardian, thou to whom the Divine Goodness has confided me, deign to-day, and all the days of my life, to enlighten, guard, direct and govern me.

LITANY OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.
Christe, audi nos.
Christe, exaudi nos.
Pater de cœlis Deus, miserere nobis.
Fili Redemptor mundi Deus, miserere nobis.
Spiritus Sancte Deus, miserere nobis.
Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, miserere nobis.
Sancta Maria, Angelorum regina, ora pro nobis.

Sancte Michael, ora pro nobis.
Sancte Gabriel, ora pro nobis.
Sancte Raphael, ora pro nobis.
Omnes sancti Angeli, Archangeli et supernæ Potestates, orate pro nobis.
Sancti Angeli, in aula cœlesti triumphantes, orate pro nobis.
Sancti Angeli, Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, incessabile voce dicentes,
Sancti Angeli, solium Dei circumstantes,
Sancti Angeli, in conspectu Domini faciem velantes,
Sancti Angeli, gloriam Dei zelantes,
Sancti Angeli, animarum salutem spirantes,
Sancti Angeli, custodes nostri,
Sancti Angeli, familiares nostri,
Sancti Angeli, juvenilem ætatem specialiter protegentes,
Sancti Angeli, de conversione peccatoris gaudentes,
Sancti Angeli, de reprobatione peccatoris amare flentes,
Sancti Angeli, orationes nostras Summo Deo offerentes,
Sancti Angeli, divinas gratias nobis transferentes,
Sancti Angeli in hora mortis nostræ contra angelos malos debellantes,
Sancti Angeli, post obitum animas nostras in sinus Abrahæ portantes,
Sancti Angeli, consolatores Patriarcharum,
Sancti Angeli, illuminatores Prophetarum,
Sancti Angeli, dirigentes pedes Apostolorum,

Orate pro nobis.

Sancti Angeli, conforatores Martyrum,
Sancti Angeli, excitatores Confessorum,
Sancti Angeli, protectores Virginum,
Sancti Angeli, excelsi in cætu omnium Sanctorum,
Orate pro nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, parce nobis, Domine.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, exaudi nos, Domine.
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
V. Adorate Deum,
R. Omnes Angeli ejus.

Oremus.

Deus, qui ineffabili providentia, sanctos angelos tuos ad nostram custodiam mittere dignaris, largire supplicibus tuis eorum semper protectione defendi et æterna societate gaudere. Per Christum, etc.

LITANY OF THE HOLY ANGELS.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Jesus, hear us.
Jesus, graciously hear us.
God, the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Queen of Angels, pray for us.
Saint Michael,
Saint Gabriel,
Saint Raphael,
Holy Seraphim,
Holy Cherubim,
Holy Thrones,
Holy Dominations,
Holy Virtues,
Holy Powers,
Holy Principalities,
Holy Archangels,
Holy Angels,
All ye holy angels, who stand upon the high and lofty throne of God,
Who cry to Him continually, Holy, holy, holy, God of hosts,
Who dispel the darkness of our minds, and give us light,
Who are the messengers of heavenly things to men,
Who have been appointed by God to be our guardians,
Who always behold the Face of our Father Who is in heaven,
Who rejoice over one sinner doing penance,
Who led Lot out of the midst of the ungodly,
Who ascended and descended on the ladder of Jacob,
Who delivered the divine law to Moses on Mount Sinai,

Pray for us.

Who brought good tidings when Christ was born,
Who ministered to Him in the desert,
Who carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom,
Who sat in white garments at the sepulchre of Jesus,
Who appeared to the disciples as He went up into heaven,
Who accompany the soul to its last judgment,
Who offer to God the prayers of them that pray,
Who assist us in the last struggle, at the hour of death,
Who conduct to heaven the souls of the just, cleansed from every stain,
Who work miracles by the divine power,
Who are set over kingdoms and provinces,
Who have often delivered God's servants from prison, and other perils of this life,
Who have often consoled the holy Martyrs in their torments,
Who are wont to cherish with peculiar care the prelates and princes of the Church,
All ye orders and hierarchies of blessed spirits,

Pray for us.

From all dangers deliver us, O Lord.
From the snares and malice of the devil,
From all heresy and schism,
From sudden and unlooked-for death,
From everlasting death and eternal damnation,
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, spare us, O Lord.

Deliver us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Lord.
V. Lord, hear my prayer.
R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

Prayer.

O God, Who dispensest the services of angels and men in a wonderful order, mercifully grant that our life may be protected on earth by those who always do Thee service in heaven. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYER TO ALL THE ANGELS.

O angels, so pure and holy, truly happy spirits, who bend before your God, and contemplate so joyfully the countenance of the heavenly Solomon, Who has communicated to you so enlightened a wisdom, Who has ennobled you by so many prerogatives, and made you worthy of such eminent glory; you who are such brilliant stars, that you appear with splendour in the highest heaven, shed, I implore you, over my soul your happy influence, preserve my faith in its purity, my hope in its firmness, my heart in its integrity, and grant that I may always advance in the love of God and my neighbour. I pray you also, O blessed angels, that you will conduct me, by your celestial power, in the way of humility, of which you have ever shown me an example, so that after this life I may deserve to contemplate with you the supreme beauty of our heavenly

Father, and be received in the place of one of those stars who, by their pride, fell from heaven.

LITTLE OFFICE OF THE HOLY ANGEL-GUARDIAN.

ATTRIBUTED TO ST. CHARLES BORROMEO.

Prayer.

O God! Who in the order of Your providence have given to man the help and guidance of superior spirits, grant me the grace so to honour by these prayers the angel who is my guardian, that I may deserve to feel at all times the effects of his defence and protection, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth one God, world without end. Amen.

Invocation to the Angel-guardian.

Holy angel, who behold ever, and adore the face of, our eternal Father, since His infinite goodness has confided to you the care of my soul, help it always by His grace, enlighten it in darkness, console it in trouble, warm its coldness, protect it in temptation, and govern it in all the course of its life. Vouchsafe to pray with me, and, because my prayers are so cold and tepid, inflame them with the fire with which you burn, and carry them up to the throne of God to offer them to Him. Grant that by your intercession my

soul may be humble in prosperity, and courageous in adversity, enkindled by the fervour of its faith and by the joy of its hope, and that labouring in this exile only to advance towards its heavenly country, it may aspire more and more, by sighs of ardent love for Jesus its Saviour, to adore Him eternally, and enjoy with you, in the company of the holy angels, that ineffable glory which is His, for ever and ever. Amen.

MATINS AND LAUDS.

Holy angel of God, who art my guardian,
Enlighten and pray for me.
Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord,
And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.
O God, come to my assistance.
O Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
Praise be to Thee, O Lord.

Hymn.

From earliest dawn of day,
  Angel of charity, beloved guide,
Imprint on my mind the way
  Of faith and truth for which so many died.

Ant. "Behold, I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared." (*Exod.* xxiii. 20.)

In the sight of the angels I will sing unto Thee, O my God.

I will worship towards Thy holy temple,
And give praise unto Thy name.

Prayer.

O God, who in Thine unspeakable providence vouchsafest to send Thine angels to keep guard over us, grant unto us Thy suppliants that we may be continually defended by their protection, and rejoice eternally in their society. Through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

PRIME.

Holy angel of God, who art my guardian, offer my prayers to God, and pray for me.

O God, come to my assistance.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.

Angelic messenger of our God Most High,
Although, alas! unworthy of thy zeal,
Bear thou my prayer and humble loving sigh
To Him who in His goodness all doth heal;
Avert my sentence, and prevent my ruin,
Guide me to heaven, and save me from all sin.

Ant. "And there was given to him much incense that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God; and the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the angel." (*Apoc.* viii.)

In the sight of the angels, etc. (And prayer as at Matins).

TERCE.

Holy angel of God, who art my guardian and consoler, pray for me.
O God, come to my assistance, etc.
Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.

Satan and his wicked army
Against us war declare,
And fight with ever cruel fury,
While yet we linger here.

But ever vanquished by the might
And power of our angelic guide,
The foul oppressor takes his flight,
And leaves our angel at our side.

But oft deaf to God's loving voice,
Who so sweetly and gently calls,
Man breaks His laws, of sin makes choice,
And, alas! by rebellion falls.

Still, let him invoke with fervour
His holy angel-guardian,
Who will turn away God's anger,
And show him the road to heaven.

Ant. "And the angel that spoke in me came again: and he waked me as a man that is wakened out of his sleep." (*Zachar.* iv. 1.)

In the sight of the angels, etc. (And prayer as at Matins.)

SEXT.

Holy angel of God, who art my guardian, and excitest me to love God, pray for me.

O God, come to my assistance, etc.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.

I rest confiding in Thy care,
My guardian and sweet comforter;
And when I trouble have to bear,
Always to thee I fly for shelter.

O guide me day by day,
Until my latest breath,
And show me light's eternal ray,
After a happy death.

Ant. "For He hath given His angels charge over thee: to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." (*Ps.* xc. 11. 12.)

In the sight of the angels, etc. (With prayer, as at Matins.)

NONE.

Holy angel, who art my guardian, and who incitest me to serve God, pray for me.

O God, come to my assistance, etc.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn of Père de la Tour.

Angel of God,
Minister of His Providence,

Angel of God,
Who followeth me everywhere,
In the shadow of thy presence,
Oh! watch and guard my innocence.
Angel of God,
In my exile,
Remember and pity my misery.
In my exile
From all peril save me,
My guide, my friend, and brother be,
Give me strength, and light to see,
In my exile.

Ant. Blessed be my God, Who hath sent His angel, and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me. (*Dan.* vi., 22.)

In the sight of the angels, etc. (With prayer as at Matins.)

VESPERS.

Holy angel of God, who art my guardian, and who punishest me when I sin, pray for me.

O God, come to my assistance, etc.

Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.

Our angel is a prince of heaven,
By God created in innocence.
Ah! never let us in his holy eyes
Wound or grieve him by a slight offence.

For should we not have cause to fear,
That he would one day leave us;

And remember that our angel dear
Mourns and weeps o'er every sin.

Ant. Send now, also, O Lord of Heaven, Thy good angel before us, for the fear and dread of the greatness of Thy arm. (*Math.* xv. 23.)

In the sight of the angels, etc. (With prayer as at Matins.)

COMPLINE.

Holy angel of God, who art my guardian and defender, pray for me.

Convert Thou us, O God our Saviour,
And turn away Thine anger from us.
O God, come to my assistance.
O Lord, make haste to help me.
Glory be to the Father, etc.

Hymn.

In the last combat of this mortal life,
Protect me, angel, tender, faithful friend;
Help me in danger, for in constant strife
I live, till death doth darkest struggle end.
Ah! guardian dear, guide my soul immortal,
And lead it to the joys of bliss eternal.

Ant. "But as the same Lord liveth, His angel hath been my keeper both going hence, and abiding there, and returning from thence hither: and the Lord hath not suffered me, His handmaid, to be defiled, but hath brought me back to you without pollution of sin." (*Judith* xiii. 20.)

In the sight of the angels, etc. (With prayer as at Matins).

The Commendation.

To Jesus we offer this angelic office
From hearts which burn with His ardent love;
May His angel guard us, and keep us from all vice,
And guide us at last to heaven above!

(Extracted from a book entitled *The Month of October consecrated to the Holy Angels.*)

PRAYERS

DURING HOLY MASS.

On Entering the Church.

This is the house of God. Grant me, O Lord, the respect which I ought to have at the sight of Thy holy altars.

At the beginning of the Mass, make the sign of the Cross, and say:

Lord, grant me the grace to present myself before Thee in the dispositions which Thou requirest of me, so that, in union with the priest, I may offer worthily this adorable sacrifice to Thee.

At the Confiteor.

Thou hast no need of my confession, O my God; Thou seest all the iniquities of my heart.

I confess that I have sinned by thought, word, and deed, and I ask Thee most humbly for pardon, for I am resolved rather to die than to displease Thee again.

When the Priest ascends the altar.

The priest approaches Thine altar, O my God, to reconcile us with Thee. Destroy, I beseech Thee, by Thy goodness, every obstacle which could prevent this reconciliation.

At the Kyrie eleison.

Have pity on me, Lord, have pity on me; for though I should repeat every moment of my life, have pity on me, O my God, it would not be sufficient for the number and greatness of my sins.

At the Gloria in excelsis.

Thy Holy Scriptures tell us, O my God, that he who does not love Thee will be condemned to eternal pain; that we must love Thee, and bear with one another, for that if we do not suffer with Jesus we shall not be glorified with Him; that neither the impure, nor drunkards, nor calumniators, will be inheritors of Thy kingdom. Imprint these truths in our hearts, Lord, and grant us grace to conform ourselves to them.

During the Gospel.

Thou teachest us, Lord, in Thy holy Gospel, that he who wishes to be Thy disciple must renounce himself, take up his cross, and follow Thee; that, to obtain eternal life, we must keep all Thy commandments; that the road to heaven

is narrow, and that the one that leads to perdition is the most frequented. Thou commandest us to love our enemies, to do good to those that hate us, and to pray for those who persecute us. Thou sayest to us: Blessed are the poor; and woe to them who have their consolation in this world. I believe, O my God, all these truths. Credo, etc.

At the Offertory.

Accept, O my God, this immaculate host, and this water and wine, which will be changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son. We offer Thee this adorable Victim in remembrance and continuation of the Sacrifice of the Cross; we offer It to Thee, first, to render to Thy Divine Majesty the homage which is due to Thee; secondly, in thanksgiving for all Thy benefits; thirdly, in expiation for the sins of the whole world, and particularly my own; and fourthly, to implore of Thee all the graces which we stand in need of.

At the Orate Fratres.

Receive, O Lord, this sacrifice, which we offer Thee by the hand of Thy priest; accept it to Thy glory, and for our benefit, and that of Thy whole Church.

At the Preface.

It is time, O my soul, to raise thyself above the things of this world. Lift up, O Lord, lift up Thyself our hearts to Thee, and permit us to unite our feeble voices to those of the blessed,

and to say in this our exile what they sing eternally in the bliss of heaven: Holy, holy, holy, is the God Whom we adore, the Lord God of hosts.

After the Sanctus.

Eternal Father, God of mercy, preserve and govern Thy Church, sanctify and spread it over the whole world, and unite in one mind and heart all those who belong to it. Bless our holy Father the Pope, our Bishop, our Pastor, and also all orthodox believers and professors of the faith.

Before the Consecration.

What is passing on the altar, O my Saviour, puts me in mind of what passed on Calvary. There Thou didst die by the ignominious death of the Cross, and what must be my sentiments at the thought of this heart-rending sight, of which, as faith teaches me, I am the cause. Ah, yes, Lord! my sins sacrificed Thee to the justice of Thy Father; for Thou didst die to obtain my pardon, and to deliver me from eternal death, which I had deserved. Grant that I may never forget such a benefit, but that I may cease to sin, and live only for Thee.

At the Elevation of the Sacred Host.

O Jesus, my Saviour, true God and true man, I believe that Thou art really present in the Sacred Host, and I adore Thee there present with all my heart.

At the elevation of the Chalice.

O precious Blood which was shed for the remission of sins, I adore Thee. Grant, O Lord, that I may be always ready to shed my blood for Thy glory.

At the Pater Noster.

O my God, although I am but a miserable creature, nevertheless I dare to call Thee Father. Thou dost wish it, Lord, and do Thou give me grace never to render myself unworthy of the title of Thy child. May Thy holy Name be always praised. Do Thou reign in my heart absolutely, so that I may accomplish Thy Will on earth, as the saints do it in heaven.

At the Agnus Dei.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us (*Three times.*)

After the Agnus Dei.

O Lord, grant us peace, that peace without which Thou dost forbid us to approach Thy holy altar. Thou dost pour down Thy graces only on those who are united among themselves by charity; give us then, O my God, this charity. grant that we may love each other, and that we may form but one heart and one spirit.

At the Domine non sum dignus.

Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word, and my soul shall be healed. (*Three times.*)

After the Domine non sum dignus.

No, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; O! would that I were

pure enough to receive Thee every day, but since my sins and the occupations of this life prevent my doing so, graciously permit that at least I may receive Thee in my heart and spirit.

At the Blessing.

Holy and adorable Trinity, we thank Thee for the grace which Thou hast given us, and we beseech of Thee to be pleased to accept the sacrifice which we have just offered Thee.

PRAYERS FOR BENEDICTION.

Regina cœli, lætare, alleluia,
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia,
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia,
Ora pro nobis, Deum, alleluia.

V. Gaude et lætare, Virgo Maria, alleluia.
R. Quia surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia.

Salve Regina, mater misericordiæ, vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra salve. Ad te clamamus exules filii Evæ. Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrymarum valle. Eia ergo, advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte. Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende. O clemens! O pia! O dulcis Virgo Maria!

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei genitrix.
R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum

Novo cedat ritui:
Præstest fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. Amen.

O Salutaris Hostia,
Quæ cœli pandis ostium:
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.

Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria,
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patri. Amen.

Ave verum Corpus natum
Ex Maria virgine,
Vere passum immolatum,
In cruce pro homine.

Cujus latus perforatum
Vero fluxit sanguine.
Esto nobis prægustatem
Mortis in examine.

O Jesu dulcis! O Jesu pie!
O Jesu! fili Mariæ, tu nobis miserere.

Ad oremus in æternum sanctissimum Sacramentum.

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes; laudate eum, omnes populi.
Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus, et veritas Domini manet in æternum.

Sub tuum præsidium confugimus, Sancta Dei Genitrix; nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus nostris, sed a periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa et benedicta. Amen.

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THE TWELVE MONTHS SANCTIFIED BY PRAYER.

JANUARY	... Month of the Infant Jesus.
"	... Month of Spiritual Gifts.
FEBRUARY	... Month of the Holy Family.
MARCH	... Month of St. Joseph.
APRIL	... Month of the Passion.
"	... Month of the Holy Ghost.
MAY	... Month of Mary.
JUNE	... Month of the Sacred Heart.
JULY	... Month of St. Mary Magdalen.
"	... Month of St. Anne.
AUGUST	... Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
"	... Month of St. Peter.
SEPTEMBER	... Month of the Sorrows of Our Lady.
OCTOBER	... Month of the Holy Angels.
NOVEMBER	... Month of the Holy Souls.
DECEMBER	... Month of the Shepherds.